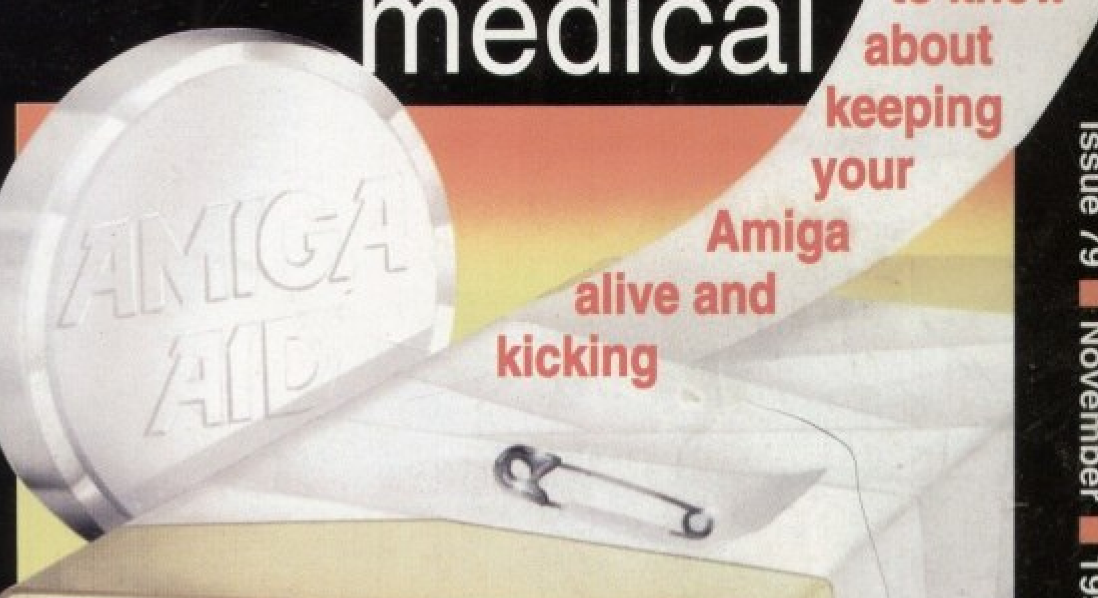
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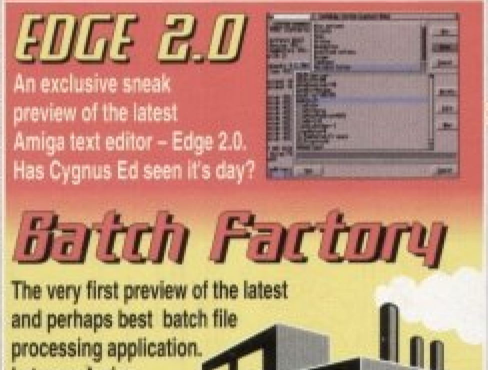
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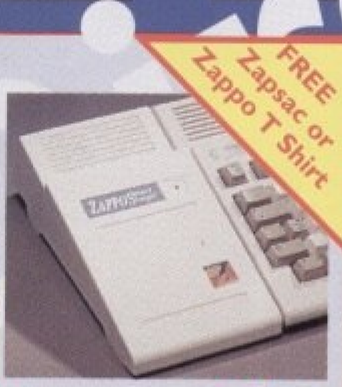
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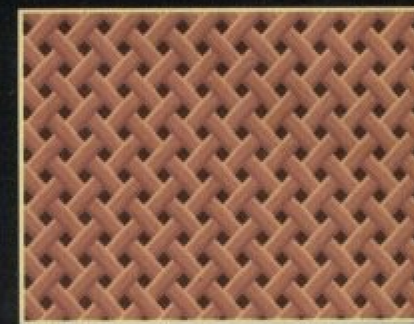
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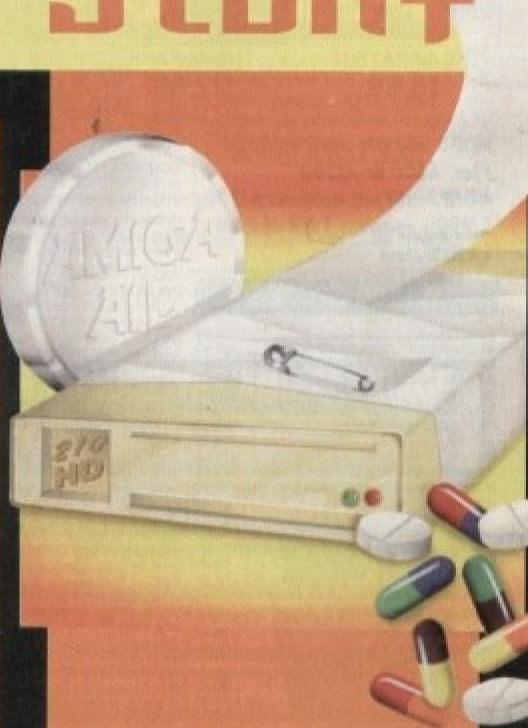




## Features

Next issue on sale 20 October

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See page 31

# The Coverdisks

Page 22

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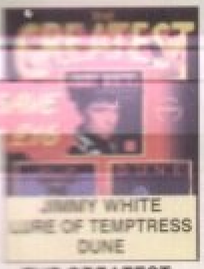


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Turn to page 56

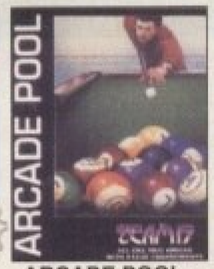
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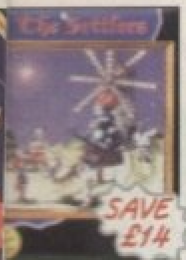


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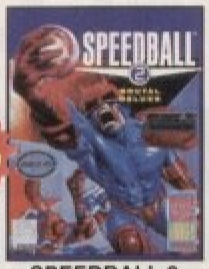
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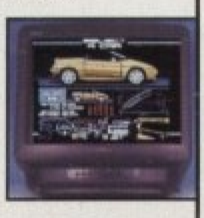
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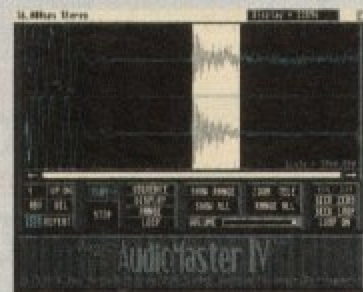
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## Music Samplers etc.

Megalosound is the new 8-bit, stereo, direct-to-disk sampler package; the software is packed full of easy-to-use editing features, special effects and extras such as the ability to print waveforms and sample information.

The package allows sampling up to 84KHz mono and 56KHz stereo to memory and up to 21KHz stereo to hard disk on an A1200. Supplied with a hardware volume control and an extensive 144-page manual, Megalosound is impressive value and Gold-rated by CU Amiga, with 89% from everybody's favourite magazine, Amiga Format!



AudioMaster IV is regarded as the de-facto standard in sound sampling and editing software. With its incredible range of features and clear, informative displays, it is hard to beat as a sound editing system.

AudioMaster IVis compatible with Megalosound and any other sound sampling hardware that connects through the Amiga's parallel port. Please call for further information.

### ProMIDI Interface

The ideal MIDI interface for all Amigas, this smart-looking device comes with MIDI in, MIDI thru and two MIDI out ports and is complete with manual, software and a flying cable for convenient positioning.

## Graphic Design

### VistaLite 3.0



Create stunning landscapes with this amazing 3D simulation program. Supports HAM8 and 256 colour mode and requires 2Mb of RAM and Workbench 2.0 or above. A simply superb product from Virtual Reality Labs!

### Distant Suns 5.0

Be the star of your own trek through space! Animate the solar system, view the same night sky as the 3 wise men and navigate by the stars with this 3D Desktop Planetarium. Requires 2Mb RAM and Workbench 2.04 or greater.

## Pricing & Ordering Details

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| TurboText | £39 | Distant Suns 5.0 | £29 |
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All goods are offered with a no-nonsense 30-day money-back guarantee, if you are not completely satisfied with the product.

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## Video/Presentation



The best-value real-time video digitiser you can buy; VideoMaster gives you the ability to record real-time monochrome video with sound at 25 frames per second as well as quality full-screen stills from your camcorder or video recorder. VideoMaster RGB includes our new colour splitter, ColourMaster, and produces amazing quality colour stills.

VideoMaster AGA works on the A1200 and A600, connects via the PCMCIA slot for extra speed and freedom to use other peripherals, allows high quality stereo sound and supports HAM6 and HAM8 up to 640 x 512 resolution for stills.

ColourMaster is a new electronic colour splitter which works in conjunction with VideoMaster for stunning colour stills.

### VideoStage Pro

Spectacular video and on-screen interactive productions are easily created with this brand-new release from Oxxi. Shows can incorporate text, graphic objects, animated sequences and sound.

The *Storyboard* features icons for insertion of show events such as graphic images, title screens, sound events, ARexx calls, genlock events and play loop events; a *Timeline* allows different tracks for each of these.

Videostage Pro supports the concept of *Actors* allowing animation of any drawn object, button or brush and actors may be overlapped in their motion so that multiple objects move at the same time, for smoothness.

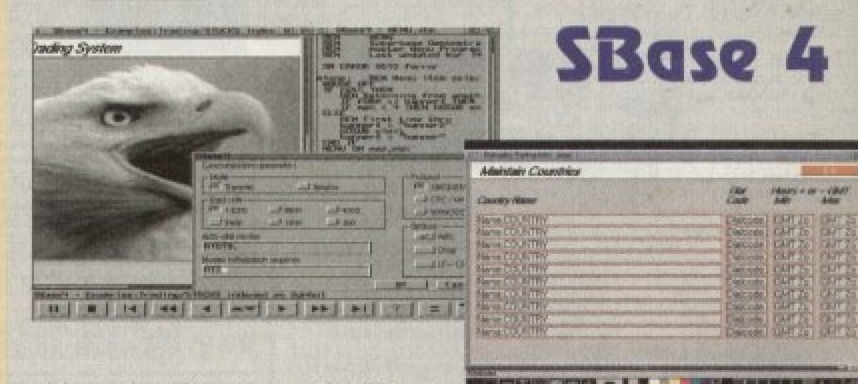
The *Genlock* control supports G-Lock and SuperGen genlocks as well as all generic Amiga genlock controls. *Sound* support for 8SVX samples and NoiseTracker, ProTracker and SoundTracker music modules.

Over 60 built-in dazzling *Special Effects* with wipes, fades, scrolls, cross-fades etc.

Videostage Pro requires an Amiga with a hard disk and 3Mb RAM (at least 1Mb chip RAM). AmigaDOS 2.0 or higher.

## Business Applications

### SBase 4



We are pleased to announce that SBase 4 is back in the UK with Digital Direct. SBase 4 Personal and SBase 4 Professional are up to version 1.3n now and we have both in stock, ready for immediate despatch.

These products are renowned for their power and their range of features and have been available on the Amiga platform for many years in earlier versions. Now they have both been brought right up-to-date with support for the very latest Amiga computers.

Both SBase Personal and Professional are full-featured, fully relational and powerful databases with pull-down menus, multiple windows and complete access to your Amiga's multi-tasking environment and they are now compatible with AmigaDOS 3.0 and the AGA chip set.

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By ADAM PHILLIPS

# Bidding for their rights

WITH all the high profile chest beating of product laden companies at the ECTS this month, it came as something of a pleasant surprise to be ushered into an exclusive hotel room on the first floor of the Holiday Inn, London for a low-key press conference.

The meeting was to discuss the future of the Amiga and the validity of Commodore UK's bid.

Present, along with a host of journalists, were the two key figures at Commodore UK, David Pleasance and Colin Proudfoot, ready to answer and explain a few burning issues that have been taking up so much space in recent news articles: what is happening with Commodore?

According to Pleasance, the UK team are still highly confident of a positive outcome for their bid. "Over the weekend, the final bid has been pulled together – it'll be on the Bahamian liquidators' desk by tomorrow morning (5th September)."

## CONCLUSION

The decision makers have been given ten working days to draw a conclusion to the lengthy proceedings concerning Commodore UK's bid. If successful, the team will end up owning the rights to past, present and research and development plans for the future.

Despite the apparent organisation and efficiency of the UK bid, the process has been beset by problems in recent weeks.

The main setback has been the major inventors of components being held at a factory in the Phillipines.

Vital to any mass production in the future, Commodore UK has been told by the courts that the stock cannot be touched until after Christmas.

What this means, in the short term, is that if successful, there will be a stock shortage of 1200s and CD32s come Christmas, no matter what happens. The only good news is that 4000s will be in ample supply.

David Pleasance is ready to accept that the stock will be "less than originally expected. We can't sell hundreds of thousands of units because we can't make them."

As far as competition goes, Samsung and two States-based companies are the only apparent contenders in the financial boxing ring at the moment.

The Japanese giant has already made it all too clear that it has no interest in injecting new life into Commodore but simply wants new technology to use in other areas.

Pleasance is well aware that another company could step in at the last minute but is prepared for that occurrence. The lack of competitors may suggest a lack of interest in Commodore, but Pleasance believes that it is something else: "There is a stigma round Commodore's performance (in the past) – it has frightened people away."

If the UK bidders labours do not pay off, a future strategy has already been drawn up to polish the tarnished image of the once great company.

## NAMING

First will be a name change. Computer Trade Weekly, the industry's newspaper has reported that the new company will be called Amiga International.

From there, the short term plan is to "concentrate on the core business, sell current products and continue the employment of some people."

The next stage will involve discussions with distributors to draw up forecasts for the next 12 months. Bearing the results in mind, a marketing plan can be produced to maximise the company's resources.

Apparently, the team is not interested "in a quick killing at Christmas" but instead want to cut back on all major subsidiaries and "grow organically" in the words of Proudfoot. As for the future, plans are already in place, ready to begin if the bid goes through. The employment of new staff is of paramount importance. "There are currently 17 research and development engineers still on staff but we want to move that up to the 60 mark" commented Proudfoot.



***David Pleasance:" The final bid has been pulled together... we want to concentrate on the core business, sell current products and continue the employment of some people"***

"We also want to establish 22 people to aid the 246 software publishers in whatever they do."

The CD32 was met with, it seemed, less enthusiasm than in the past. With the oncoming wave of next generation consoles snapping at the small but well formed heels of Commodore's CD-ROM machine, Pleasance said: "the CD32 is in fairly good shape" and that competition such as Sony "does have a future in the market place."

According to the managing director, there will be 200 titles available for the CD32 come Christmas. We'll wait and see.

Probably the biggest news were the plans for future technology. The much speculated and often discussed AAA chipset has been dropped and replaced with designs for a RISC-based system.

One of the principal reasons for the switch is the lack of an operating system for the new defunct chipset – it would simply take too long to develop one.

## DEVELOPMENT

The new machine will go into development straight away if the bid is accepted. Pleasance estimates the development systems will be ready in six months for the community to begin work on software and a further 12 months for it to hit the retail shelves.

There are also plans to produce a high-end work station "that'll be 20-30 times faster than a 4000." The managing director is adamant though that the Amiga should be "a multimedia platform – and not just for games."

Despite concerns over the potential shortage crisis at Christmas, it would seem Commodore UK has a definite and well thought out strategy for the future of Amiga machines.

Perhaps as an indication of their confidence, the team are already planning the relaunch party to be held on 13 October. Whichever way the bidding battle swings, we'll know next month and the waiting will finally be over.

# NEWS BRIEFS

## Multi-platforms

With 166 exhibitions under their belt, the All Formats Computer Fairs are continuing their regular tours round the country. Covering the latest in ST, Amiga, PC, shareware, games and even 8-bit products, a full rundown of shows can be obtained from Bruce Everiss on 0608 662212.

## Monitor magic

Idek, the makers of the popular MF-8617 Vision Master, are set to release the world's first 21 inch, full remote control colour monitor with motorised tilt and swivel base. Based around Mitsubishi's "Diatron" tube, it displays 1600*1200 non-interlaced resolutions at 72Hz vertical refresh.

With its microprocessor control via the On-Screen Display, the user is able to adjust basic picture size and location, picture distortions such as pin cushion (barrelling effect), trapezoid (vertical parallelogram) and rastar rotation (picture twist with bezel).

Costing a healthy £1,649, the monitor can be seen at the Business Computing Exhibition in late September and Idek can be reached on 0438 745482.

## Virus virility

After the success of the Virus Checker Compilation Disk, Craig Holmes has launched a subscription service for Workbench 2 & 3, which provides customers with the latest Amiga anti-virus software as soon as it is released.

It is possible to subscribe to either six or 12 updates which are mailed to customers. Upon subscribing, owners are then entitled to free telephone software support.

Six issues cost £14 and twelve issues cost £25. However, if customers mention *Amiga Computing* when ordering, they are entitled to £2 off the above prices.

For more information, contact Craig Holmes on 0902 305209.

## Amiga shows

For those who want to know more about the forthcoming World of Amiga show being held in mid December, information is available on Kixx.

Commodore will also have a stand at the Motor Show/Future World/Ideal Home exhibition which is taking place at the NEC in Birmingham from the 18th to 30th of October.

# New Epson scanner unveiled

**Continuing in its success with the GT scanner range, Epson have released the GT-9000, a 30-bit, single pass colour scanner bundle at £1,299. Suitable for high-end desktop publishing users, the hardware allows the recognition of over one billion different colour hues from the image being scanned.**

**"The new GT-9000 is fast, inexpensive and looks good... this scanner is perfect for those wanting high resolution and reliability at an exceptional price," Commented Tonmy Petford, a representative for the company.**

**For further information, phone Epson on 0442 61144.**



*GT-9000: Offers a high resolution of 600*1200 dpi*

# Videopilot resurfaces

After a somewhat shaky past in terms of distribution, the Videopilot, a highly rated editing system for the Amiga, has climbed out of commercial limbo, been given a new cipset and software and been picked up by Ambervane for distribution in Britain.

The Videopilot V330 enables three source players to be used with one recorder and offers VITC, LTC and Sony RCTC time codes to aid editing accuracy.

The hardware also includes special effects such as three machine A/B roll plus the control of external equipment like Panasonic mixing desks.

The Videopilot costs £850 plus VAT and can be ordered via Ambervane on 0792 476076.

# Help group

The Samaritans have been offering emotional support to the suicidal and depressed for over 40 years but now, in a response to new technology, the charity has opened an e-mail service for Internet users.

Called "Help By E-mail", the on-line service was test launched in July and proved so successful it has been set up indefinitely.

"During the test month we received over 200 messages. Many were from well wishers, journalists and academics but there are around 15 very desperate people as well. The need for a full launch of our service with the easier address was amply demonstrated," said Mike Haines, the Director.

To use the service, e-mail on: jo@samaritans.org and for anonymous mail, type: samaritans@anon.penet.fi. All messages will be handled in the strictest confidence.

# Crime unit cracks down on porn pirates

Following the recent discovery of pirated CD software valued at £10 million, ELSPA's crime unit headed by John Loader has recovered over 200 CD-ROM discs and writing equipment from two addresses in Manchester.

The software, worth £500,000, has been examined by both ELSPA investigators and the Greater Manchester Obscene Publications Department. "Not only does illegal activity pose an enormous threat to the commercial interests of the UK's legitimate computer games software industry", stated Loader," but it highlights the increasing problem of production and distribution of illegal, pornographic software through out the UK."

This month also saw the conviction and imprisonment of two counterfeiters, Donald George Brown and David Doyle. Brown was recently found guilty of four offences relating to copyright infringement and was given three months in prison. 5,600 disks containing copied software and copying equipment were uncovered at his premises by police and ELSPA officials.

David Doyle was found to be manufacturing counterfeit software and received a six month sentence plus a £5000 bill for court costs.

If you have any information that should receive the attention of the crime unit, phone John Loader in confidence on 0386 833810.

# Internet opened up

With the super information highway starting to take shape, CompuServe have begun the testing of a new service that allows members to participate in discussions on USENET. This access should allow the user to enter thousands of discussion groups on a huge variety of differing subjects.

Once testing has been complete, CompuServe members will be able to read and contribute to the USENET News groups. "CompuServe recognises our members want to augment the wide array of products and services available on CompuServe by expanding their information horizons on the Internet as well," said Charla Beaverson, Internet project manager at CompuServe.

Also recently introduced is the on-line support directory. According to CompuServe, with over 800 hardware and software companies available for consultation about anything from a printer and hard drive to a monitor and cable, the service provides a comprehensive and useful database.

"Support Directory makes it very easy for members to get help with their hardware and software problems and make informed buying decisions," said Jim Hogan, director of product marketing.

For more information, contact CompuServe on 0800 289378.

# Weird Science

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## Amos CD

**THE OFFICIAL AMOS PD LIBRARY ON COMPACT DISC**

The Official Amos PD Library is the largest source of Amos related source code and programs in the world today. The library is run by Len & Anne Tucker and is endorsed by Europress Software, the publishers of Amos and Amos Pro. This compact disc contains the entire library from disk 1 to 620, each one arranged in it's own directory and catalogued. The disc contains in excess of 33,000 files with over 1600 Amos source code files, 100 sprite banks, 260 Ctext banks, 800 samples, numerous music banks and several extensions to Amos & Amos Pro. Workbench is also included as are Parnet and Sernet to allow transfer of the contents across a network from both the CDTV and the $CD^{32}$. This CD is truly a testament to the immense following that Amos and Amos Pro has achieved in the past few years and represents thousands of man hours of writing Amos code which will prove to be an invaluable source of help and tuition to the Amos user. Weird Science is proud to bring you this remarkable resource for only **£19.95**

Compatible with all Amigas

## Network CD

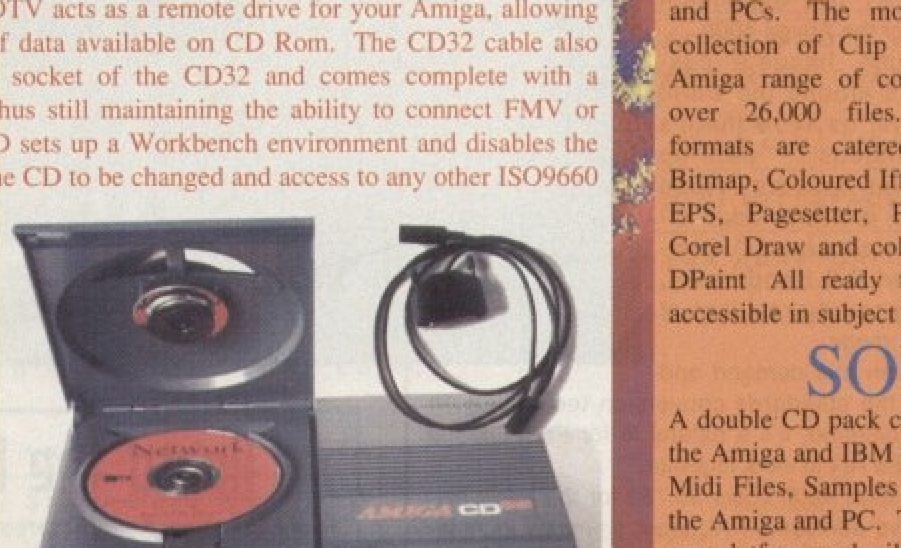
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The Network CD sets up a link between a CDTV or CD32 and any other Amiga. The CD32 or CDTV acts as a remote drive for your Amiga, allowing access to the vast pool of data available on CD Rom. The CD32 cable also available uses the AUX socket of the CD32 and comes complete with a keyboard pass through, thus still maintaining the ability to connect FMV or SXI addons. Network CD sets up a Workbench environment and disables the reset function, allowing the CD to be changed and access to any other ISO9660

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## New Releases

### CLIP ART

Over 550megs of Clip Art for Amigas and PCs. The most comprehensive collection of Clip Art ever for the Amiga range of computers. In total over 26,000 files. The following formats are catered for, B&W Iff Bitmap, Coloured Iff Bitmap, Proclips, EPS, Pagesetter, Pagestream, IMG, Corel Draw and coloured brushes for DPaint All ready to use and easily accessible in subject directories.

### FONTS

A complete CD dedicated to Fonts for the Amiga range of computers. Also PC compatible. The following formats are catered for, Adobe, CG Fonts, Coloured, Postscript, Prodraw, IFF, PCX, Pagestream, Truetype, Calamus and GDOS. Adding up to the most complete CD of Fonts for the Amiga ever. In total over 18,000 files in 900 directories. All ready to use and easily accessible in type directories.

### SOUNDS TERRIFIC

A double CD pack containing over 1.2 Gigabytes of musical and sounds data for the Amiga and IBM PC computers. The contents include Modules, Sonix Scores, Midi Files, Samples in RAW, IFF, WAV & VOC formats and utilities for both the Amiga and PC. This all adds up to the most complete collection of sounds on any platform and will form a vital part of any musicians CD collection.

**Clip Art & Fonts £ 9.99 each**
**Sounds Terrific £ 19.95**
(DOUBLE CD)

Weird Science. 1 Rowlandson Close, Leicester, Leicsestershire. LE4 2SE
Tel. & Fax. 0116 234 0682



## Fractal heaven

American company, MegageM, have released the first in a series of CD disks that contain an extensive amount of fractal images. The FractalPro Image Library Volume One contains over 350 pictures plus dozens of VistaPro DEM files of fractal objects.

The GIF and IFF files have been broken down in to a series of 16 which can be viewed as "thumbnails" on screen. 19 sets of zoom sequences are available through the user interface and the makers claim that the program is compatible with any CD drive and Amiga with AGA machines have been accommodated for via higher screen resolutions.

In the States, the package is retailing at $59.95 and, for further details, contact Daniel Wolf on 0101 805 349 1104.

## Objects galore

The Imagine 3D package continues to gather support with a set of object disks from Kyte Products that feature various useful creations for artists. Horses, underwater scenes and human forms are the main content of the pictures library with prices ranging from £5 up to £35.

For more information, phone Steven Edwards on 0272 4008905.

## Ooky and spooky

For the last two months, Creepy BBS's Amnet has surfaced for all serious Amiga users. Offering echoes, the service has a variety of different services to inform and aid Commodore owners. Comms, chat, news and DOS help are just some of the facilities available to users.

David Lascelles of Creepy BBS believes that Amnet offers a deined and moderated network unlike Fidonet. Lascelles can be contacted via netmail on either 39:137/13.1 (Amiganet) or 2:256/503 (fidonet).

## Oops

Last month, we printed an incorrect number for Ramiga International. The actual number required is 0690 770304.

## Music mayhem

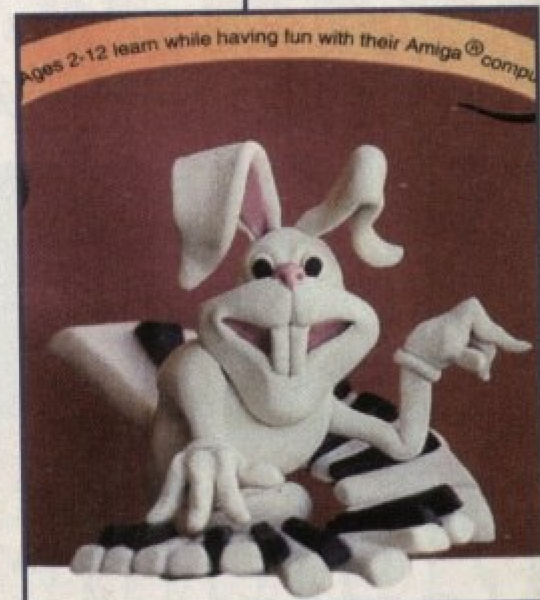
To help young children to learn about the fundamentals of music, Canada-based company, WindShadow, have produced an edutainment title called " Making Music with Bertie Bunny".

Made up from a set of differing exercises, the "player" can move Bertie round the screen, selecting him to play different instruments and tunes.

The child is also able to learn the sound of certain musical instruments and to recognise various musical tunes: the melody, a counterpoint to the melody, an obligato accompaniment or a rhythmic accompaniment. There are also many other features on offer for the budding musician.

According to Gordon Wilkes, President of WindShadow software: "This product is unusual in that it is easy to use for children as young as two-years old, while providing opportunities for older children to explore."

The package retails at £24.99 and can be ordered directly from Gordon Wilkes on 0101 905 836 4400.



***Bertie Bunny: Edutainment for the younger generation***

## Passport to Video Toaster PAL

After signing an agreement with NewTek, makers of the award winning Video Toaster, Prime Image, also based in the States, has released the Passport 4000.

The company claims that the device offers digital video signal handling capabilities such as conversion to international video standards including PAL, SECAM, PAL-M, PAL-N and NTSC 4.43.

This means that all British video companies and individuals who have been waiting for the PAL version of Video Toaster can now have access to the power of NewTek's television standard product.

The Passport 4000 also offers time base correction and sychronisation and adds AT bus expansion slots for the Amiga 4000.

"Prime Image's customers around the world have let us know there's tremendous pent-up demand for the Video Toaster in diverse video format applications," commented Bill Hendershot, founder and president of Prime Image.

"Given this demand and given the standards conversion technology PI has pioneered, it's a natural fit for Prime Image and NewTek to work together."

Passport 4000 costs $6,750 for the basic unit with two additional PAL input channels increasing the price by $2,950. For more details, contact Bobbie Hendershot on 0101 408 867 6519.



***Passport 4000: Giving access to Video Toaster***

## Computer comms

Portable computers are becoming more and more common place and Sector Software are set to release several packages to enable users to transfer their wordprocessed files from portables to an Amiga.

Catering for the Cambridge Z88, Tandy WP2/3, and Amstrad NC 100/200, the links packs retail at £25 each for the software and cable. According to the company, the utility is useful for brushing up portable-created documents with the Amiga's DTP skills and as a backup for the portable's memory.

The links will be available in October and, for further details, phone David Batty on 0772 452414.

## Heard the latest?

Have you heard any interesting Amiga news recently? If you've picked up some hot gossip that you think we could be interested in give Adam Phillips a call now on 0625 878888.



# POWER COMPUTING

DESIGN *and* INNOVATION

## POWERSCAN 4



Produce 256 greyscale images (on a AGA machine), scan in 64 greyscales (non AGA Amiga can only display 16), add colour to greyscale images, special effects, new support for 18-bit scanner, add text to scans. A1200/600 version available.

| | |
|---|---|
| POWERSCAN 4 | £119 |
| POWERSCAN 4 OCR | £139 |
| SCAN INTERFACE | £50 |
| POWERSCAN 4 S/W | £20 |
| OCR SOFTWARE | £49 |

## EPSON SCANNER

The GT-6500 and GT-8000 24-bit colour flatbed scanners from Epson scan up to A4 in size, with output resolutions of up to 1200DPI on the GT-6500 and 1600DPI on the GT-8000 in 16.7 million colours, greyscale or line art. The scanners include either Powerscan or Image FX scanning software.

| | |
|---|---|
| GT-6500 POWERSCAN | £599 |
| GT-6500 IMAGE FX | £689 |
| GT-8000 POWERSCAN | £849 |
| GT-8000 IMAGE FX | £929 |
| DOCUMENT FEEDER | £399 |

## COLOURSCAN

The new 18-bit colour handscanner produces stunning colours with clarity and verve, brightening up those presentations. With over 250,000 colours and award winning PowerScan software, anything is possible!

- Colour and mono software
- Full colour manipulation
- Up to 400DPI
- 256 greyscale (AGA machine)
- 18-bit colour (AGA machine)
- OCR optional extra

| | |
|---|---|
| COLOUR POWERSCAN | £239 |

## HARD DRIVES

We can supply SCSI or IDE 3.5"/2.5" hard drives in many different sizes. Including cables and installation software.

| | |
|---|---|
| 80MB IDE 2.5" | £160 |
| 130MB IDE 2.5" | £199 |
| 170MB IDE 2.5" | £249 |
| 260MB IDE 2.5" | £319 |
| 52QMB SCSI/IDE | £149 |
| 160MB SCSI/IDE | £199 |
| 200MB SCSI/IDE | £249 |
| 540MB IDE 3.5" | £349 |

## OPTICAL DRIVE

Power award winning 128MB optical disk drive

| | |
|---|---|
| 128MB OPTICAL INT. | £549 |
| 128MB OPTICAL EXT. | £649 |
| 128MB OPTICAL DISK | £29 |
| SCSI CONTROLLER | £129 |

## SYQUEST DRIVE

Removable storage systems from Syquest.

| | |
|---|---|
| 3.5" IDE INTERNAL | £399 |
| 3.5" IDE EXTERNAL | £499 |
| 3.5" 105MB CART. | £79 |
| 3.5" SCSI VERSIONS | £POA |

## TANDEM CD-DE



- For the Amiga 1500/2000/3000/4000
- Supports Mitsuma CD-ROM drive
- Supports Syquest 3.5" drives
- Supports IDE hard drives
- Play audio CD utility
- Requires Kickstart 2.04 and above
- Includes cable, software and manual

| | |
|---|---|
| TANDEM CD-DE CARD | £69 |
| CD-DE A1200 CARD | £69 |
| CD-DE CARD, CD-ROM | £229 |
| MITSUMA CD-ROM | £169 |

## DISK EXPANDER

Disk Expander includes the following features:

- Can add 50% to your hard drive capacity
- Fast compression and decompression
- Reliable in tests- no data corruption
- Works with all drives, SCSI, IDE, Floppy, etc
- Works on any Amiga and any Kickstart
- Once installed the program is transparent to the user

| | |
|---|---|
| DISK EXPANDER | £35 |
| FLOPPY EXPANDER | £9.95 |

## VIDEO BACKUP

Use a VCR as a backup device. 200 floppy disks fit on to a 4Hr tape . Video Backup allows you to watch television on your 1084s monitor.

| | |
|---|---|
| VIDEO BACKUP SCART | £65 |
| VIDEO BACKUP PHONO | £60 |

## ACEEX MODEM

NOT BT APPROVED



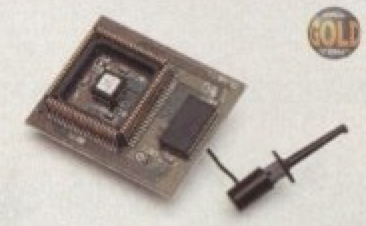
- External Fax and Data modem
- Receive and send faxes in the background
- Full Haynes AT command set supported
- Supports class 1, 2, and 3 fax commands
- Fax send and receive
- Auto dial and auto answer
- Supports error correction and detection
- Leased line support
- All cables and manuals supplied

| | |
|---|---|
| ACCEX MODEM v32bis | £169 |
| ACCEX v32 TRAPFAX | £199 |

## MISCELLANEOUS

| | |
|---|---|
| MIDI INTERFACE | £19.95 |
| VGA ADAPTOR | £15 |
| PSU FOR HARD DRIVES | £39 |

## MEGACHIP



Increase your Amiga 500/2000 chip RAM to a total of 2MB. MegaChip does this by using its own 1MB of RAM and drawing extra memory from any other RAM you have installed in your Amiga. No soldering is required.

| | |
|---|---|
| MEGACHIP RAM | £159 |

## MEMORY

We manufacture a vast range of memory cards for all the Amiga range of computers. Please telephone us for prices and availability.

## WARP ENGINE

The high speed 040 board which installs directly into the CPU slot, not a Zorro III slot!

| | |
|---|---|
| WARP ENGINE 28MHz | £799 |
| WARP ENGINE 40MHz | £1199 |

## WORKBENCH 2.1

Release 2.1 enhancer, including 2.1 software and user guide manuals.

| | |
|---|---|
| 2.1 ENHANCER | £69 |
| ROM SHARE INC. 2.04 | £99 |
| 2.04 ROM CHIP | £29 |

## PREMIER VISION

You've heard how the Amiga has made TV programmes possible such as Star Trek-TNG, Babylon 5 and Seaquest DSV. We are the ultimate multimedia service for corporate and business users and offer a wide range of services, including: monthly events on multi-media, design and install complete systems, training, CD-ROM mastering and duplication. Some of our clients include: CIC Video, Granada TV, Shell, National Trust, MOD.

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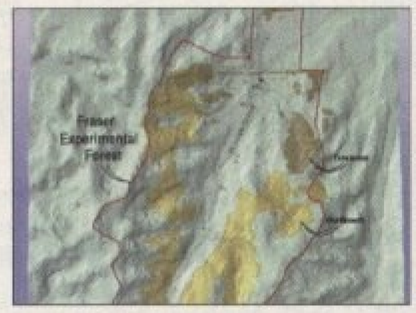
Credit card No.

Expiry date Sign

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# USA news

*Do you want to creat[e] a place that's perfect f[or] your needs? Denny Atki[n] discovers the only contende[r]*

# World building

Move over, VistaPro. Make room, Scenery Animator. There's a new contender in the world-rendering ring, and it looks like it could pack a knockout punch.

World Construction Set, from Questar Productions, combines traditional 3D rendering technologies with a new "natural" ecosystem modelling technique to produce dazzling, realistic landscape images.

Word Construction Set uses a Geographic Information System database to allow it to render much larger areas with a greater degree of detail than competing programs.

It uses on-demand object loading to allow it to render large amounts of data without needing an incredible amount of memory.

The company claims that you can render the entire US state of Colorado in 90-metre square samples, 80 million polygons total, in 8MB of RAM.

Given enough time to render, this system would even allow you to animate a continuous zoom out from a single forest clearing to a view of the entire planet.

WCS will render US Geological Service standard DEM files. (VistaPro DEM support is planned for a coming update.)

But WCS does more than just create pretty pictures. It includes a layering system and a map module that allows you to place vector objects, such as political boundaries, roads, buildings, streams, and coastlines on your image; you can also label images.

You can even load AutoCAD DXF vector objects and place them on your image. If you have a Summagraphics graphics tablet, it can be used with the mapping module.

The algorithmic ecosystem mapping prevents too-regular-looking distributions of trees and plants, making for a more natural looking image. You can choose between water, bare, rock, conifer, deciduous, or grass ecosystems.

Skies and backgrounds can be gradients, or you can use animated bitmap image backgrounds.

WCS supports 24-bit rendering at any resolution and aspect ratio up to 32767 x 32767 pixels (memory permitting). Fractal recursion levels can be adjusted to speed rendering, and detailed 2D trees allow you to create realistic vegetation density without taking forever to render.

The program also sports sophisticated animation features. Automatic turn-banking and lookahead features, as well as spline control of all motion parameters, allow you to easily create landscape overflights.

An interactive 3D wireframe layout display lets you preview and tweak your work; real-time motion previews are supported as well. All spline parameters can be edited using a timeline motion graph.

The program is multi-threaded, similar to Real 3D, so you can go on and do other work while creating images or animations.

The user interface is gorgeous – it uses MUI (Magic User Interface), which you may have already seen used in programs like the AVM voice mail system.

The program retails for $250, but until October 30 it is available direct from the manufacturer for $195.

For more information, contact Questar Productions, 1058 WCR 231/2, Brighton, Colorado 80601; phone (303) 659-4028. You can also e-mail wcsinfo@arcticus.burner.com.

## ASDG is history!

Yes, it's true, there's no more ASDG. But don't panic, the company hasn't closed, it's just changed its name for the better.

Taking advantage of the success of its Elastic Reality morphing program (a souped-up version of Morph Plus for the PC, Mac, and SGI), ASDG has changed its name to Elastic Reality, Inc. Despite the name change and the success of its non-Amiga products, the company has pledged to continue to support our favourite computer.

## DKB relocates

**DKB, manufacturer of the MegaChip, Multistart II, and A4091 SCSI-2 controller, has moved to new quarters. Now that the move is over, the company is hard at work on its new Talon graphics card.**

**The new address to contact the company is: DKB, P.O. Box 438, Wixom, Michigan 48393. The new technical support number is (810) 348-3755, and the company can now be faxed on (810) 348-3531.**

## Video super company

Some of the most creative forces in desktop video have now joined forces. Digital Creations, creators of Brilliance, DCTV, and the SuperGen; Progressive Image Technology, creator of peripherals for PCs and Macs; and Play, formed by a group of renegade former NewTek employees, have merged into one large company which will be known as Play Incorporated.

The President of the company will be former NewTek VP Paul Montgomery, as well as Kiki Stockhammer, video-savvy spokesperson and dream date of many an Amiga nut. Digital Creations' John Botteri will serve as CEO.

Although two-thirds of the new company is made up of ex-Amigans, the initial products will be for the IBM-compatible platform.

## Top tip

It's not a new product, but it's news from a US company that will be welcome to folks who bought Digital Creations' Brilliance 2.0 and found that it won't work properly in a system with a Picasso II installed.

To make it work, you just need to add a few Tool Types to the program icons, using the Workbench Icons/Information menu item.

**For Brilliance, add these tooltypes:**

SCREEN.DEPTH=5
SCREEN.HEIGHT=200
SCREEN.WIDTH=320
SCREEN.OVERSCAN=Text
SCREEN.MODEid=0x00011000

**For the 24-bit TrueBrilliance version:**

SCREEN.DEPTH=6
SCREEN.HEIGHT=200
SCREEN.WIDTH=320
SCREEN.OVERSCAN=Text
SCREEN.MODEID=0x00011800

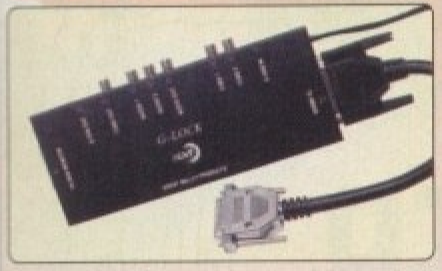
SILICA ARE NOW IN 17 BRANCHES OF DEBENHAMS - SEE BOTTOM PANEL FOR DETAILS

# GVP WORLD CLASS AMIGA PERIPHERALS

# NEW PRODUCTS & NEW LOW PRICES

## G-LOCK VIDEO GENLOCK

### FOR ALL AMIGAS



- Simple, Intuitive Mouse-Driven Software Control Panels. Full ARexx, CLI and Workbench Interfaces
- Software Selection of 2 Composite Video Inputs or 1 Y/C (S-Video) Input
- Simultaneous Composite & S-Video and RGB Outputs
- Software Selection or Mixing of 2 Audio Inputs with Volume, Bass and Treble Control
- Software-Driven Video Processing Amplifier Offering Complete Real-Time Signal Processing Control, Including Hue, Brightness and Saturation.
- Software-Controlled RGB Colour Splitter Compatible with Video Digitizers
- Built-in Transcoder Converts Input Video to Composite, Y/C, RGB or YUV Outputs
- Full ECS/AGA Support for Full Compatibility with A1200 and A4000 Systems
- Compatible with Popular Titling Software like AmigaVision™, Scala-Multimedia 200/210/300™ and Gold Disk's Video Director™
- Full Audio Support

This extremely high quality Amiga genlock, from GVP, has an intuition-based software control panel with full ARexx and command line interfaces. It is easy to use and supports most VHS and S-VHS video models. For crisp overlays of scrolling, or static titles, graphics over live video and recording to videotape with high quality results.

GOLD 94%

VIDEO: G-Lock's six video control panels enable you to perform a wide array of special effects on still or motion video including:
- Colorizing for unique visual effects.
- Creating your own "Classic" black & white videos using the Colorkill feature
- Colour filter effects
- High-quality keying effects with bitplane or chroma keying
- Manual or automatic (ARexx triggered) fades and cuts

AUDIO: G-Lock's dual-input audio panel switches, mixes and shapes sound for effects such as:
- Combining stereo channels or separate inputs without a "Y" adaptor
- Treble and bass equalization
- Plus, add DSS8+, see below, or any Amiga created/modified digital audio samples to your final mix

**G-LOCK** ~~£299~~ **£269** INCLUDING VAT - VID 2500

## A1230-II 40MHz & 50MHz ACCELERATORS

### FOR AMIGA 1200




- 40MHz 68030EC and 50MHz 68030 Accelerator
- Unique Feature Connector for Module Expansion
- Memory Management Unit on 50MHz Version
- Optional 60ns 32Mb RAM Upgrade
- Battery Backed Clock
- Optional 40MHz or 50MHz 68882 Maths Co-Processor
- Memory Management and Cache Control Software
- Kickstart Remapping Technology

The new GVP A1230-II advanced accelerators are available in 40MHz 68030EC and 50MHz 68030 configurations. They can make your Amiga run at least 6X times (40MHz version) or at least 8X times (50MHz version) faster than the standard A1200 and feature unique warranty safe module expandability - see right.

**MMU OR FPU?**
The 50MHz version includes a built-in Memory Management Module (MMU), for more sophisticated memory control. An optional FPU (Floating Point Unit: for faster maths calculations) is available for the 40MHz and 50MHz versions (see below), both have RAM upgrade options (up to 32Mb, see right).

**RAM UPGRADES**
The A1230-II accelerator combo has two 32-bit SIMM sockets for easy Fast RAM expansion. The following SIMMs can be used in those slots:
- 1Mb 60ns Fast RAM SIMM - (RAM 3216) - £69 inc VAT
- 4Mb 60ns Fast RAM SIMM - (RAM 3246) - £199 inc VAT
- 16Mb 60ns Fast RAM SIMM - (RAM 3286) - £999 inc VAT

**SCSI-II EXPANSION MODULE**
- A1291 - Fastest SCSI Controller Yet
- DMA SCSI Design • FaaaST ROM Controller
- High Speed, Unique DPRC Technology for Direct HD to Memory Transfer

**£59** inc VAT - UPG 1500

**NEW LOW PRICES** — A1230-II ACCELERATOR

| | 0Mb RAM | 1Mb RAM | 4Mb RAM | 4Mb RAM + FPU | 8Mb RAM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40MHz 68030EC NO MMU | £229 inc VAT - UPG 1240 | £249 inc VAT - UPG 1241 | £429 inc VAT - UPG 1244 | £529 inc VAT - UPG 1246 | £629 inc VAT - UPG 1248 |
| 50MHz 68030 WITH MMU | £299 inc VAT - UPG 1500 | £329 inc VAT - UPG 1510 | £499 inc VAT - UPG 1540 | £599 inc VAT - UPG 1545 | £699 inc VAT - UPG 1580 |

## EGS SPECTRUM 24-BIT GRAPHICS CARD

### FOR A1500/A2000/A3000/A4000



**TAKES YOUR AMIGA BEYOND AGA!**

EGS Spectrum is the answer to all your 24-bit graphics card requirements. It is a high performance, high resolution, 24-bit board that will take any Amiga 1500, 2000, 3000 or 4000 beyond AGA! But the hardware is only half of the picture. Without quality software, your investment will be wasted. Not only does GVP's own award winning graphics application ImageFX fully support EGS Spectrum, but also, using a Workbench driver, nearly all existing Amiga Workbench compatible applications will also work on and support the EGS Spectrum system.

- 2Mb of On-Board Memory
  2Mb gives higher resolutions & more colours (1600 x 1280)
- Programmable Resolutions Up To an Amazing 1600 x 1280 - 800 x 600 in 24-bit
- Real-Time 24-bit Display and Graphics Operating System!
- High-Performance 24-bit EGS-Paint Package for Professional Painting and Photographic Editing
- Amiga-RGB Pass-Through so the Amiga and the EGS SPECTRUM can Share a Single Monitor
- Zorro II (16-bit) and Zorro-III (32-bit) AutoSensing for Maximum Performance
- Scan Rates Up To 80KHz
- 80,000,000 Pixels/sec Pixel Display Speed (8-bit)
- Workbench driver to run Workbench directly on the EGS SPECTRUM Board, Freeing Up Valuable Chip RAM
- Hardware Blitter to Accelerate All GUI Operations, Including the Workbench Driver
- System Conforming Applications Can Use the EGS Screenmodes Directly from the Display Database
- EGS Requires Kickstart 2.04 or Higher

**2Mb VIDEO RAM** ~~£399~~ **£349** INCLUDING VAT - VID 7320

## G-FORCE 040 40MHz ACCELERATORS

### FOR A3000/A4000




**MAKE YOUR AMIGA THE FASTEST IN THE WORLD!**

Never before has such a powerful processor been available for the Amiga! The G-Force 040 puts a 40MHz Motorola 040, plus built-in 40MHz 68882 FPU into your A4000 (030 or 040) and couples it with up to 32Mb of super fast 32-bit SIMM memory on the board. The Standard board comes with 4Mb RAM - see left for RAM upgrades.

To further increase memory from the maximum 32Mb available on the G-Force 040 card, add one of the two 96Mb memory expansion boards available - see left. These enable you to take your total memory up to an amazing 128Mb RAM, directly connected to this blazing processor.

For maximum performance, a second optional module will be available soon, for a full 32-bit SCSI2FAST interface, capable of data transfer speeds up to an amazing 10Mb per second!

- Fast 040 Accelerator + RAM for A3000/A4000
- 40MHz 68040 Processor
- 40MHz 68882 FPU Built-in to the 68040 Chip
- Make your A4000/030 at least 12 Times Quicker
- 4Mb RAM Fitted, Expandable to 32Mb on the Board, to a Total of 128Mb via an Extra Card - see left
- SCSI-II Fast Optional (Pricing TBC)

**RAM UPGRADES**
The standard board has two GVP 32-bit SIMM sockets, one of which is populated with a 4Mb 60ns SIMM. Available options are:
- 8Mb Add 1 x 4Mb SIMM - (RAM 3246) - £199 inc VAT
- 20Mb Add 1 x 16Mb SIMM - (RAM 3286) - £999 inc VAT
- 32Mb Remove 1 x 4Mb SIMM and Add 2 x 16Mb SIMMs - (2 x RAM 3286) - £1998 inc VAT

**RAM BOARD UPGRADES**
These optional cards have six GVP SIMM sockets to go up to an extra 96Mb. Add that to the maximum 32Mb on the board for a total maximum RAM of 128Mb.

G-FORCE 040 96Mb RAM BOARDS

4Mb POPULATED **£399** INC VAT - UPG 0874 | 16Mb POPULATED **£1199** INC VAT - UPG 0896

**G-FORCE 040** — 40MHz 4Mb RAM **£999** INCLUDING VAT - UPG 0840

## 8-BIT SOUND SAMPLER

### FOR ALL AMIGAS



Capture sound from an external source and play it back in stereo or mono on your Amiga. The latest version of GVP's Digital Sound Studio (DSS8+) enables you to create audio effects for use in games or jingles.

- New Style High Impact, Clear Poly-Carbonate Casing
- Simultaneously Holds up to 31 Sound Samples in Memory
- Real-time Oscilloscope, Spectrum Analysis, Echo & Reverberation
- AREXX Compatible
- Microphone Input
- MOD File & MIDI Compatible
- FREE Samples Disk

**DSS8+** ~~£69~~ **£49** INCLUDING VAT - MUS 2510

## VIDEO EFFECTS

### FOR ALL AMIGAS WITH 3Mb RAM



CineMorph from GVP opens up the world of Morphing, the process of converting one image to another to create dazzling special effects. Currently very popular in music videos and feature films, morphing has become the fashionable video effect to use. Now with CineMorph you can create these stunning effects on your Amiga.

- Supports the AGA Chipset
- Static or Full Motion Morphing
- Single Image Warping
- Fast Render Times
- Renders to HAM-E and DCTV

**CINEMORPH** ~~£24~~ **£15** INCLUDING VAT - ASC 4422

## IMAGE PROCESSING

### FOR ALL AMIGAS WITH 4Mb RAM

Image FX is a complete solution for all your image creation and editing needs. It has a vast range of facilities, can read and write to many other different file formats and directly controls a wide variety of hardware.



- 24-bit Painting
- ARexx Compatible
- Virtual Memory Support
- Load, Save and Convert to the Following Formats: ANIM, BMP, Clipboard, DCTV, DPAE, GIF, HAM-E, ILBM, IMPULSE, JPEG, RENDITION, SCULPT, TARGA, TIFF AND MORE
- Scanning, Framegrabbing & 24-bit Board Support
  Comes with Modules for Several Hardware Devices: JX100, IV24, AGA/AA Chipset
- Create Animations
- Numerous Special Effects
  Edge Feathering, Shading, Alpha Channel, Morphing, Compositing etc

GOLD 92%

CINEMORPH INCLUDED! SEE DETAILS LEFT

**IMAGE F/X** ~~£189~~ **£179** INCLUDING VAT - ASI 2002

## ACCELERATORS

### FOR AMIGA 1500 & 2000

FAST! 32-bit TECHNOLOGY



GVP offer a range of accelerators for the A1500/A2000 that outstrip the competition for speed and specifications.

| G-FORCE ACCELERATORS | 030 40MHz | 040 33MHz |
|---|---|---|
| Speed MIPS* | 12.1 | 30 |
| Processor | 68030EC | 68040 |
| Maths Co-Pro. | 68882 included | 68882 in 68040 processor |
| Std 32-bit RAM | 4Mb | 4Mb |
| Max 32-bit RAM | 16Mb | 64Mb |
| Extras | SCSI | SCSI Ser/Par |
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# A question of confidence



## As time runs out all eyes look to Europe. The question is can Mr Pleasance & Co. repair the damage inflicted by months of indecision

Attending shows is part and parcel of almost any consumer magazine. As you'd expect, such gatherings generally follow the same format – kiss hands, shake babies, chase-up gossip, hassle for products and so on.

With this in mind, I packed a bag and headed off to Florida to attended the world's biggest computer graphics extravaganza, namely Siggraph 94. Equipped with the stiffest of stiff upper lips, I battled through glorious sunshine and on to the show.

After the ubiquitous trip to the press office, it was time to hit the stands and slip into show mode. However, it was at this point that the usual format went out the window. Within minutes I found myself answering rather than asking the questions.

Even the biggest guns on the American Amiga scene were desperate for all and any news. Just prior to the event the Management buy-out rumour had hit. Now everyone previously secure in the knowledge that Samsung, Hewlett Packard or Superman would save the day were back to square one.

Obviously being one of the few limeys in the attendance I was an obvious target, but unfortunately I was as much in the dark as everybody else. After explaining as much, the conversation invariably turned to research and development. Would they continue to support the Amiga?

Amazingly enough the vast majority had no hesitation in saying yes – providing the new look Commodore could get its act together! To be honest, I fully expected the vast majority to say enough's enough, we're packing up and moving on to the PC or Macintosh.

Obviously, even the biggest names wouldn't find it easy to change direction at the drop of the hat, but it was the underlying willingness to stay with the machine that took me by surprise. The will is there, and so is the demand for machines, but as it stands there's simply no more high-end Amigas left to buy – both home and abroad.

According to gossip, production of A4000s won't start until November at the earliest – assuming the corporate capers are sorted out. And as far as R&D on new machines is concerned, God only knows. However there is a faint glimmer of hope.

Although there's been no official announcement, it appears that Commodore have doubled the wages of the engineering department at West Chester R&D research facility, no doubt in an attempt to keep the remaining staff until the long-awaited announcement is made.

For those waiting for the mythical A5000 with its Risc based CPU and Windows NT compatibility, I suspect it's going to be a long wait. However, one of the high points of the show was the first official look at the Raptor II and Raptor Plus rendering engines.

Both units use Risc technology to bring workstation performance to the Amiga – in particularly Lightwave.

Each uses Ethernet connection to link direct to the Amiga while operating under Windows NT as the basic OS.

### SAVIOUR

This move towards compatibility between formats could well prove the saviour of the Amiga as the premier videographic desktop platform. Another massive announcement at the show was the launch of Lightwave on both PC and SGI formats.

Although seen as yet another nail in the Amiga coffin by some, I feel it can only help the cause in the long-term. If NewTek want to maintain and develop a foot-hold in both the PC and SGI markets they'll have to work hard in the R&D department – the fruits of which will also be applied to the Amiga version.

OK, the PC market may be massive but it's the Amiga that dominates the video market, quite simply because the PC is useless for videography. They don't like, nor understand video, and to teach them costs an absolute fortune in additional hardware.

They may be fast, but will that really inspire videographers to trade their existing Amiga systems, especially when they could out render an SGI for a fraction of the price by simply adding a Raptor to their existing kit.

Basically, the only thing that will kill the Amiga off is Commodore. The willingness to develop and buy the machine is there. All they have to do is get in gear before it's too late.

If this farcical situation isn't sorted out soon many developers will be forced to look elsewhere, whether they want to or not.

The future of the Amiga hinges on one key factor. If the new look Commodore can't get the range back in manufacture before Christmas it looks very grim.

Fortunately the likelihood of the Commodore bid being accepted seems more and more certain. According to a reliable source, a manufacturing deal is already in place to start production of the entire range in mainland China, while R&D will remain at West Chester.

Lets hope the red tape is kept to a minimum and the announcement made so we can all get back to business.

*Paul Austin*
Editor


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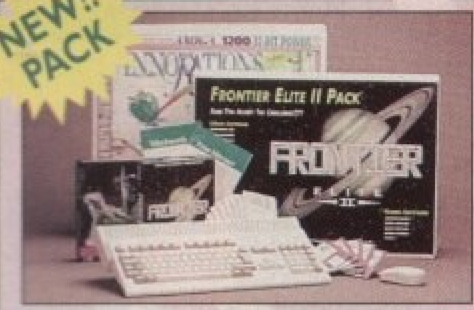
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# Bargain backdrops

*Ever wished you could create professional presentations without spending a fortune on the software ? Gareth Lofthouse finds out if Pro-fills offers a solution.*

The idea behind Pro-fills is very simple. It offers a range of attractive patterns and textures that can be used to enhance video and desktop presentations, and gives the user the opportunity to design their own backdrops. Not too interesting in itself, perhaps, but used with other utilities it gives scope for some impressive effects.

The first bit of good news is that you don't need a super-fast Amiga to use the package. A full range of Amiga resolutions is available (ranging from low to high) allowing the user to choose an option that suits their needs and the speed of their machine.

Similarly, there is a choice between eight and 16 colour palettes, a useful point since the Amiga will move images with an eight colour palette more quickly than with the latter.

Luckily for European users, this American package can be configured for PAL as well as NTSL. Another basic but important point is that it comes with an option to install and assign the program into a hard-drive.

When booted, the user is presented with a drab but functional control menu from which to generate and save an impressive range of backdrops quickly and easily.

There is also support for overscan in a number of settings, an important addition if the owner wants to use Pro-fills for video applications .

The quality of the backgrounds is generally of a good standard with some detailed shading, and with three disks to choose from there should be more than enough choice for most users.

Patterns range from simple brick tiles and weaves to sandstone or wood-like effects, all boasting fully interchangeable palettes. This is one reason why, with a bit of experimentation, it becomes clear that the simple control box belies the package's versatility. In fact, the distributors claim that the Pro-fills package can generate 34,625 backgrounds at a maximum resolution of 10,240 by 10,240.

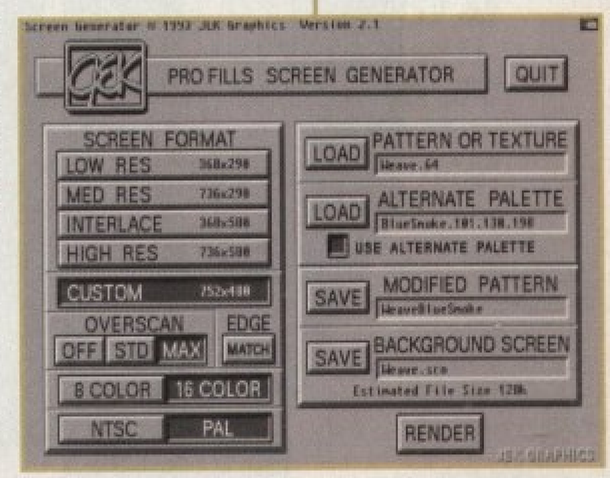
Having said this, other packages offer backdrops that are more visually impressive. However, these tend to use up huge chunks of memory while at the same time costing a great deal more.

The point about Pro-fills by comparison is that each backdrop brush takes only a minimal amount of memory. Furthermore, the program gives an estimation of the memory that a new backdrop will use, which is another small but well considered touch.

Of course, the possibilities offered by Pro-fills come to life when it is used in conjunction with other utilities. Pro-fills is particularly good value because you can use it with packages like Deluxe-paint, Brilliance and Scala to create customised effects.

For instance, you can generate your own brushes in D-Paint, though you may have to adjust your palette – taking care you leave enough colours for your text and logos.

For people who own presentation software like Scala or MediaPoint, Pro-fills could make a very useful accessory. Purchasers should be able to use the package to good effect for all kinds of multimedia and video applications. Amigas are already being widely used for multimedia and presentation purposes, so there should be a high level of demand for a package that can deliver the goods at a bargain price.




***The Control Box:** It doesn't exactly fill you with excitement, does it? Still, all the essentials are there in an easy-to-use interface*

Considering the minimal amount of memory required, the range of possibilities are surprisingly good. What's more, it makes attractive presentations available to owners of Amigas both old and new.

It's a humble package that doesn't offer the flashy effects available with other, more expensive utilities, but it does its job well because its makers have been thoughtful in its implementation.

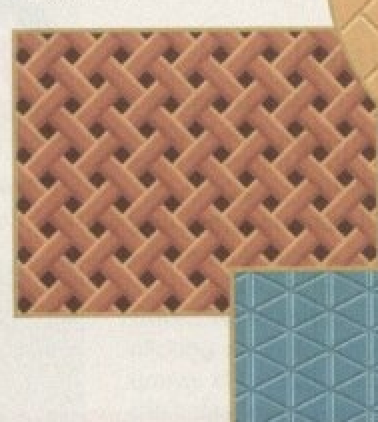
Used imaginatively, Pro-fills could be invaluable when it comes to presention. Mediascape deserve credit for coming up with a modest but capable little package. Highly recommended.

## How does it work

Compared to some other programs designed to create backgrounds, Pro-fill uses only a tiny amount of memory. The reason behind this is that the patterns are composed of small brushes, each of which only takes 1-3K.

These brushes can be seamlessly tiled together, allowing entire screens to be generated in any resolution without making large demands on hard-drive space.







*Here we have brick, weave and hexagonal designs, just a few backdrops chosen from the wide range of options. You can pick different palettes too, though your choice of colour scheme may be less garish than ours*

## The bottom line

Product: Pro-fills.
Supplier: Meridian Software.
Price: Approx. £47.95 per volume.
*Tel: 0533 863501*

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| **Ease of use** | 8 |
| **Implementation** | 8 |
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# getting started



*The Amiga Computing CoverDisk is designed to be as simple to use as possible. Follow these instructions and you'll be up and running in no time!*

**We have now managed to fix the problem with AmigaDOS displaying a "disk is write protected" requester when a write-enabled disk is inserted. Just make sure you insert a blank disk when the installer programs tell you – and not before or after.**

## De-archiving applications - Workbench 2.0 and above

Always boot from your CoverDisk when de-archiving applications. The installer programs can be located via the install icon with the appropriate name in the WB_2&3_Only drawer.

The de-archiving procedure has been much improved and now combines the power of the official Commodore installer program with that of Workbench 2.0 and 3.0.

The installer program is designed to be powerful yet simple for the beginner and features a user-friendly interface allowing you to de-archive programs with a minimum amount of fuss. The installer programs for Workbench 2 and 3 users can be located via the icons named:

```
Install[program name]
```

eg:

```
InstallPFM
```

To run, simply double click on the icon which will load up the installer program.

### Using the installer

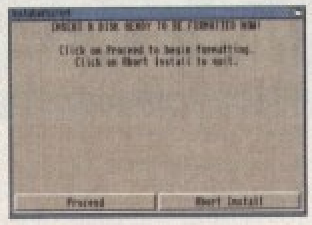
Ignore the buttons that appear when the installer program boots up and simply click on the Proceed button. The program will then copy the necessary files to RAM.

Once this has finished it will inform you that it is about to format a disk in DF0. Click on Proceed, at which point you will be told to insert a blank disk ready for formatting.

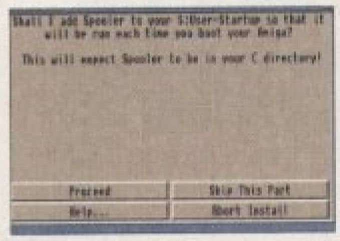
Once you have clicked on Proceed, the installer will indicate that it is formatting the disk in DF0. When this has finished, click on Proceed again to start the de-archiving procedure. When the application has been de-archived you will be told where the de-archived files are. Click once again on Proceed to finish.

If at any time you are unsure as to whether you want to continue installing, you can click on the Abort Install button.

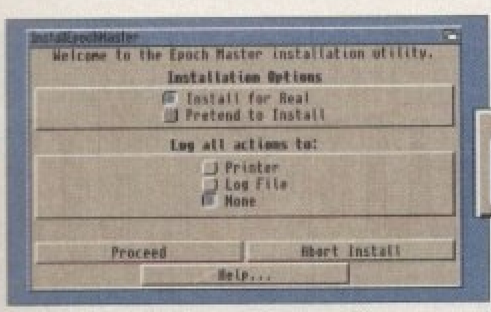
Occasionally, utilities may need to add instructions to your User-Startup file located in the S directory so that they will function correctly. If you want to add the instructions, click on Proceed when prompted.



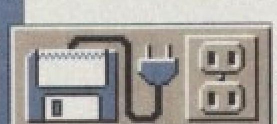
*Don't forget to insert a blank disk at the prompt and before pressing Proceed*



*Any commands that need to be added to your User-Startup can be done with the press of a button*



*Don't worry about the installer options. Simply click on the Proceed button*



*The Workbench 2.0 and 3.0 installer icon*

The Files drawer contains all the utilities set up so that you can use them from the CoverDisk. A Games drawer is also provided so that you can play these immediately. If you want to install the games make sure you copy all the necessary files across as listed in the CoverDisk pages.

## De-archiving applications - Workbench 1.3

Always boot from your CoverDisk when de-archiving applications. The installer programs can be located via the install icon with the appropriate name in the WB_1.3_Only drawer.

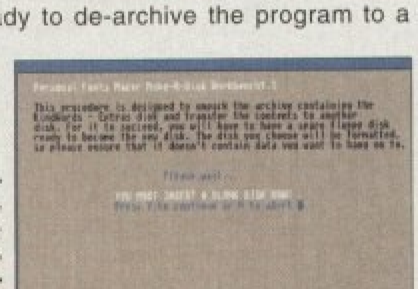
```
Install[program name]_1.3
```

eg:

```
InstallPFM_1.3
```

When you load up the 1.3 installer the program will first prepare itself ready to de-archive the program to a blank disk(s). You will then be asked to insert a disk to be formatted into DF0 and either press y to continue or n to abort.

Provided you answer y, the disk you insert will be formatted and the application de-archived.



*After inserting a blank disk press y to continue or "n" to abort*

### Installing utilities

You should first run the MakeUtilitiesDisk_1.3 to format a blank disk called ACUtilities which will be used to store any utilities you eventually install.

This disk can be used with future CoverDisk utilities until it becomes full. The MakeUtilitiesDisk1.3 program will be a permanent feature of the CoverDisk.

To install any utilities, boot your machine with your CoverDisk inserted in DF0. Utilities can be installed by clicking on their install icon found in the appropriate drawer in the WB_1.3_Only drawer. You cannot specify their destination and any additions to the Startup-Sequence must be done manually.

When installed the utilities are copied to a drawer called ACUtils on the ACUtilities disk.

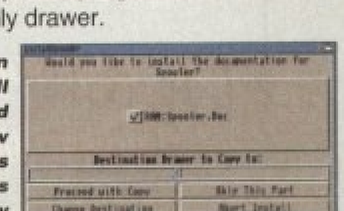
### Installing utilities

The procedure for installing utilities is much the same as installing applications, except that you can boot from your hard drive or Workbench disk. As utilities don't need to be de-archived, you are asked to specify a directory on your hard drive or Workbench disk where you would like to install them.

If you don't want to install to the default directory you can change it by clicking on Change Destination. The Show Drives button will allow you to select a new device and directory. You can create a new drawer for your utility to go in by clicking on the Make New Drawer button and typing in the name.

You can also make a utilities disk by running the MakeUtilitiesDisk1.3 program located in the WB_1.3_only drawer and installing your utilities to here. At times you may be asked if you want to install a utility's documentation. A tick box indicates that the documentation is selected for inclusion, but you can click on the box to ignore it or simply click on the Skip This Part button.

The utility installer programs can be found in the appropriate program drawer in the WB_2&3_Only drawer.



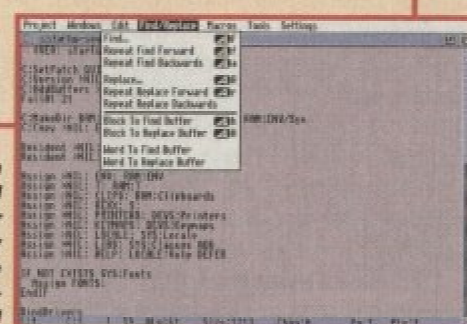
*You can easily install documents and create new drawer thanks to the installer's user-friendly interface*

# THE Cover Disks




## Give your text the Edge

*Enjoy our exclusive preview of what promises to be the most feature-packed and user-friendly text editor on the Amiga*



Edge 2.0 is a very powerful text editor which is totally configurable and feature-packed

Text editors have always been popular with Amiga owners who want to dabble with ARexx, AmigaDOS and other such scripting languages and the most popular program has always been Cygnus Ed.

INOVAtronics, creators of the excellent Directory OPus, truly believe that Edge 2.0 has Cygnus Ed on the ropes and as an indication of their confidence they are supplying you with an exclusive sneak preview of the package with limited restrictions.

Before we start, the limitations are that text files are restricted to 32k (large for a text file), the new Toolbar feature is disabled, the configuration cannot be saved and there is a three-month timer that will disable Edge 2.0 after December 15th,




## The power to

*Now you can really let your Amiga do the work with our exclusive look at Premiere Vision's excellent Batch Factory*

Welcome to Batch Factory, a master control program that will allow you to perform certain functions on multiple files while you get on with something else.

Batch Factory uses ARexx to perform its functions, but don't worry, Merlin's Software have kindly supplied several pre-written scripts which you can use with various applications including ImageFX, ADPro and even AmigaDOS. The full package contains many more pre-defined scripts.

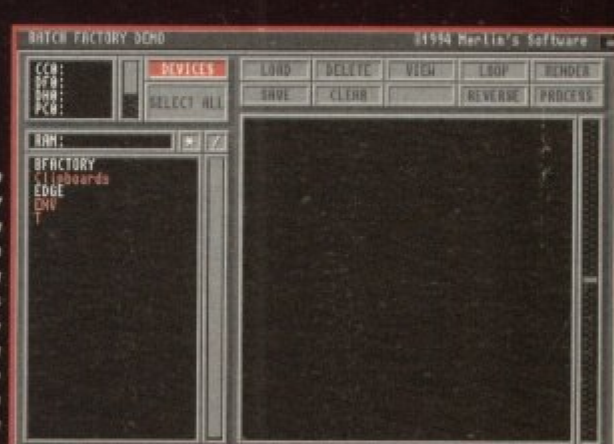
When you first load Batch Factory you will be presented with the main screen from which all actions take place. The source window is situated at the top-left of the screen and it is here that you select the directory which contains the files you want to work on.

When you have clicked on an appropriate device the files contained therein will be displayed in the directory window, just below the source window.

From here you can select the files you want to work simply by clicking on them. To indicate which ones have been selected, Batch Factory will display your chosen files in the file list window, the large area in the middle of the screen.

Now that you have chosen the file you wish to work on, you can select an ARexx script to work on the files.

Click and hold the right mouse button and select Select a Script from the Select Script menu. You will then be asked if you want to perform Single scripts or Multiple scripts. Multiple allows you to




Batch Factory allows you to perform processing functions on multiple files, giving you time to get on with something else

giving you plenty of time to make up your mind to upgrade.

Let's take a look at the many features of your demonstration version of Edge 2.0. When the program loads you will be presented with the main editing window. At the bottom of this window are several important variables – line number, column number, I for insert text mode or O for overstrike typing mode, K if the keypad is active, the decimal ASCII value of the character under the cursor, the number of lines, file size in bytes, number of changes, page number and page line number.

Most of Edge's menus are self explanatory but you also have plenty of control over how Edge 2.0 looks, feels and works via the Settings menu. Click and hold down the right mouse button and select Settings from the top of the screen. Move down to Local and release the button.

You will be provided with the ConfigEdge window along with several preference topics. It is clearly obvious what these topics do but they also make up an important element in Edge's power.

That is, to be able to customise the program to your own needs. Obviously you can't save the configuration file but any changes you make will remain while the program is running.

As we will be explaining Edge in much more detail next month we will cover the basic concepts of the program, including basic menu options this month.

Looking at the first menu – Project – the first three options read Clear, Open and Include. Clear will erase the current text from the page, Open will allow you to load up a text file no larger than 32k and Include will allow you to insert a chosen text file at the cursor position on the present editing window. The Save, Save As, Print and Print As all allow you to direct your text file to either a disk or printer. The Windows menu allows you to alter the way in which the text editing windows are displayed. All text editing takes place in a window.

Edit is where you can basically cut, copy and paste selected text. If you double-click the left mouse button over a character in your text file the cursor turns black.

If you click the button again, but this time hold it down and drag the mouse pointer, you will notice that the text between the pointer and the initial cursor position is highlighted in white. The highlighted section of text is referred to as a block. This means that you can cut, copy and paste large sections of text in one go.

In accordance with all the best text editors, Edge 2.0 supplies a comprehensive find and replace function appropriately enough in the Find/Replace window. This means that you can search for specific criteria and replace any occurrences with something else.

This is very useful for mailing lists or as a mail-merge facility. Another very useful addition to the Find/Replace menu is the Block to Find Buffer and Block to Replace Buffer. This allows you to select text, as explained above and copy it into either the find buffer or replace buffer. If you have unwanted characters in your text that are not alphabetical or numerical characters you can simply select them and copy them into the appropriate buffer rather that working round the keyboard trying to find out what key combination produces them.

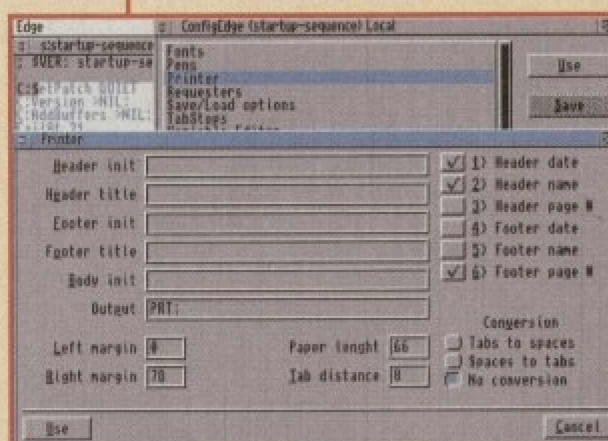
Definitely a powerful addition to Edge's arsenal is its Macro facility. We will be explaining Macros in the next tutorial but basically they allow you to record a series of activated events which can then be replayed at a later date.

For example, you may want to change a text file and apply this change over all future files. You would Macro record the changes using the original file and then replay the Macro on all the other files.

With the basic functions explained you should be fairly confident with Edge. There are many more exciting features to Edge 2.0 and we'll have more on these next month.

## Loading Edge 2.0

To install Edge 2.0 boot your Amiga with CoverDisk 1 and then click on the Edge2.0 icon. This will decompress Edge 2.0 to a fresh disk which you should have ready to insert when prompted.




*Edge 2.0 allows you to configure it totally. This makes Edge a more personal piece of software*

# process

choose several script files which will be run on the files you selected one after the other. Single indicates that you want to select only a single ARexx script. Select Single for now.

Once you have selected Single a file requester will appear asking you to select a script. Click on the directory labelled amiga and then on AMIGA_COPY_FILES.

Batch Factory will inform you of the ARexx script you have chosen, at which point you can click on Process.

The program will attempt to perform the operation you have selected on the files you selected, and if all goes well a file requester will appear asking you where you want to copy the file to.

Click on OK to select RAM, at which point Batch Factory will run through the processing until it has finished, at which point you will be notified.

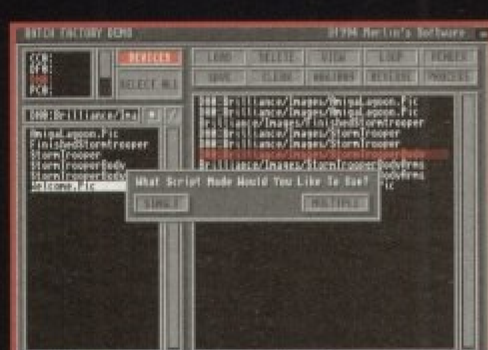
As this is a demo version of Batch Factory you will be limited to 15 files in one batch. Now you know how to batch files together and work on them, let's take another look at the display.

The Load and Save buttons allow you to load and save previously defined batches. However, as this is a demonstration of Batch Factory these facilities have been removed.

View will allow you to show a picture or read a text file. Simply select the file you want to view or read in the File List window and click on View.

Delete will remove the selected file from the File List window and Clear will clear the entire File List.

The Render and Loop buttons require more extensive explanation so we will be covering this in the next issue of *Amiga Computing*. Have fun!




*You can perform single actions or multiple actions on batches using Batch Factory will do all the rest*

## Loading Batch Factory

To install Batch Factory boot your Amiga with CoverDisk 1 and then click on the BatchFactory icon. This will decompress Batch Factory to a fresh disk which you should have ready to insert when prompted.

## Batch Factory order form

Complete this coupon and return it to:
Premier Vision, The Foundry, 156 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8EN

You can order by card on:
Tel: 071-721 7050
Fax: 071-721 7049

Please send me Batch Factory (the full product) at £39.95

Card No. .......... Expiry date ..........

Cheque/Postal Order payable to Premier Vision

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) ..........

Address ..........

.......... Postcode ..........

# Take your Amiga Multimedia System to Warp Speed with the WarpEngine4040 running a Motorola 68040 at 80/40MHz for over 30 MIPS of Workstation Performance!

**Dramatically Increase Speed for 3D Rendering, Modeling and Layout.**
**Reduces Screen redraw times for Graphic Design and DTP.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| How Fast is the WarpEngine™: | | | |
| Rendering the Texture example included with LightWave: | A4000/040-25MHz | 2 minutes, 40 seconds | |
| | A4000Warp-40MHz | Under a minute | - **Approximately 3 Times Faster!** |
| | A4000Warp-28MHz | 1 minute, 22 seconds | - **2 Times Faster** |
| Diskspeed using 2.1Gig Barracuda Drive: | Read from file 9 Mbytes/sec | CPU Available: 94% | - **up to 9 Times Faster!** |

**Coming Soon:**
The ImpulsEngine™ is a 50MHz Accelerator that can more than double the speed of an Amiga3000 and add up to 64 Megabytes of Local 030 Burst Memory™

The 40MHz and 33MHz versions include the 040 Processor, four SIMM sockets and the NCR SCSI-2 Fast HardDrive Controller.

It is more cost effective to install a WarpEngine 4028 Accelerator if you have an Amiga 4000/040 than to buy a HardDrive controller/memory board or one of each which will take up expansion slots and won't accelerate your Amiga (Ram speed is actually slower). This will double your Rendering Speed!

The WarpEngine™ uses four standard 72 pin SIMMs and allows the use of up to four different size SIMMs at the same time(4,8,16,32MB SIMMs). GVP only has two SIMM sockets onboard and uses much more expensive (up to 1.5 times as much as WarpEngine SIMMs) custom SIMM modules (only 4 or 16MB SIMMs can be used but not at the same time) which are only available from GVP.

The NCR SCSI-2 Fast 32Bit DMA Bus Master Processor makes it the *Fastest HardDrive Controller available for the Amiga!* It provides up to 10MB/s Transfers with 90 to 98% of the 68040 CPU Processing Power left available in your applications. All WarpEngines include the SCSI-2 HardDrive controller and 128MB of Ram Expansion, unlike GVP which SCSI module and optional Ram expansion module which are still not available!

All WarpEngines are fully upgradable to 40MHz!

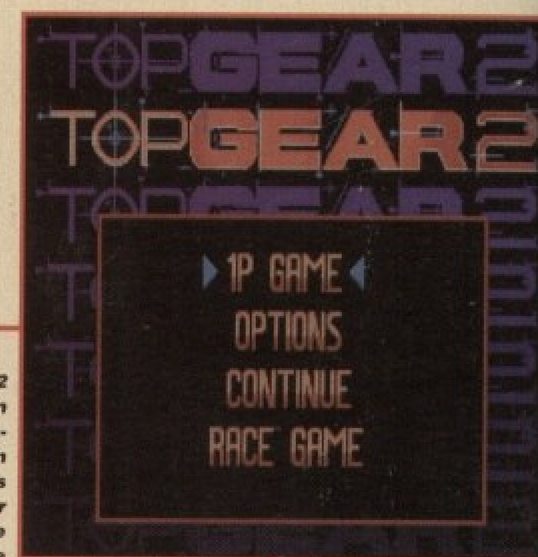
| Features | WarpEngine | GVP-040/40 | X-Calibur | FastLane | 4091 | DKB3128 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 28MHz, 33MHz, 40MHz Versions | YES | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| 28MHz Upgradable to 33 or 40MHz | YES | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| Expandable onboard to 128Megabytes | YES | NO | YES | YES | NO | YES |
| Built in SCSI-2 Fast Hard Disk Controller | YES | NO | NO | YES | YES | NO |
| Uses Industry Standard Amiga SIMM Modules | YES | NO[1] | YES[2] | NO[3] | NO | YES |
| Uses any Combination of SIMMs | YES | NO | NO | NO | NO | YES |
| Allows use of the Memory from the Amiga | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO | YES |
| Uses a Zorro III slot | NO | NO | NO | YES | YES | YES |
| Memory Speed Much Faster than Amiga Ram | YES | YES | YES | NO | NO | NO |
| Works in Amiga 3000 | YES | YES? | NO | NO | NO | Yes |
| Zorro III DMA or Buster Problems | NO | NO | NO | NO? | YES | ? |

**MacroSystem Development, Inc.**
24282 Lynwood, Suite 201 • Novi, MI 48374 • Phone (810) 347-3332 • Fax (810) 347-6643




# Top Gear 2 - A1200

*Put the pedal to the metal in this gripping and exclusive A1200 race game from race supremos, Gremlin Graphics*




**Top Gear 2 A1200 is an exclusive preview of Gremlin Graphics' thrills and spills racer of the same name**

Top Gear 2 is the latest race game from Gremlin Graphics and utilises the full power of the A1200 machine, including speed and graphics.

Gremlin have kindly supplied us with an exclusive demo of the game in which you and a friend can race around one of the 64 different race tracks in true split-screen fashion. Strap yourselves in 'cause here we go.

When Top Gear 2 has loaded you will be presented with the main options screen. From here you can select the amount of players, one or two and select your driving preferences via Options or Race Game where you'll actually compete over the provided circuit.

Once you have chosen the amount of players, select Options and you will be able to alter certain parameters regarding how the game plays.

There is no sound in this demo but you can bump up the skill levels of the other drivers, making the challenge harder.

With the correct players and options set, select Race Game in order to make your way to the grid. The next screen will allow you to enter names for players, change the gear controls between manual and automatic and choose between MPH or KPH for the speed indicator and race.

With your preferences chosen, click on Race and you will be shown the course information. This particular course is a qualifier over Auckland, Australasia.

All the information you will need in order to prepare for the race is present, including track length, laps, weather conditions and time allowed. Click the fire button to continue.

The final screen before the race begins (phew!) is the hardware shop where you can buy improved car components with the money won from races.

This facility is not available in this demo but makes the full version even more tantalising. Click the fire button once more to race.

Before we begin racing let's take a look around the racing display. Press the Help key to pause the game. At the top left area of the screen is the speedometer and below that the currently selected gear. Car damage is indicated on the car icon to the left of the screen and the amount of fuel remaining is shown below that.

To the right of the screen you can see the timer counting up, a miniature map of the track, along with the 1st and 2nd place positions, the amount of laps remaining and finally your current position in the pack.

Once you are familiar with the display, press the Help key again and at the end of the countdown press that fire button to accelerate, making sure to keep on the track.

As you pass other cars your new position will be indicated above your car and your co-pilot will shout out his or her approval with some appropriate and witty remark.




**In the full game you can earn yourself cash by winning races. The more cash you make the more you can improve your vehicle**

## Running Top Gear 2

Insert the Top Gear 2 CoverDisk demo into your A1200 and re-boot the machine. After a short while the game will load, at which point you will be presented with the options screen. Couldn't be simpler than that now, could it?

## Speed demom

Once you have the hang of controlling the car you may want to know about its nitro ability. Press the Space bar and the nitro will switch on, indicated by the flames coming from the exhausts.

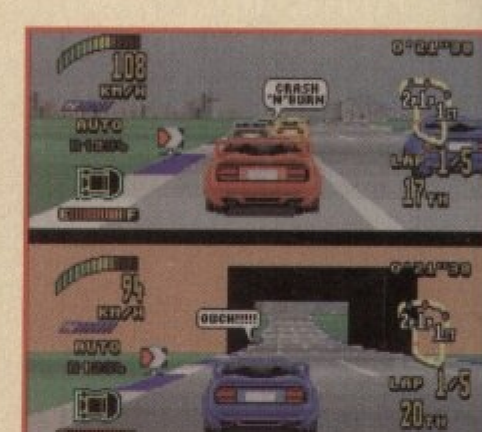
This will greatly improve your speed but only for a limited amount of time. Be warned, you only have a limited amount of nitros and they burn fuel rapidly so use them cautiously.

Also, make sure you employ the nitro at the correct times. If you're haring up the track at 140KPH and then decide to switch in the nitro you may find yourself desperately trying to steer round a bend you hadn't noticed. If you skid the car you're looking at a lot of damage. Familiarise yourself with the track and then let loose. If you have a two-player game you can attempt to drive your opponent off the track, but beware of damage. Sustain too much damage and you will be disqualified which is no way for a dude to go out.

At the end of the race, and provided you have successfully qualified, you will be shown the championship table and the race grid positions.

Unfortunately, that's where it ends. You'll have to go out and buy the full version if you want to know what happens next.

When the Top Gear 2 information screen appears, just wait for a short while and you will be returned to the main options screen. This is immediate for those who fail to qualify. Have fun and burn rubber!




**Two players can race together in our demo and fight for the top positions in the championship**




## Shareware notice

Please remember that these programs have been supplied by programmers who have written this software purely for the enjoyment of others.

If you like a particular piece of software please respect this by registering with the programmer concerned. For a nominal fee you may even receive an updated version.

## AmiDock

**Author: Gary Knight**

AmiDock is a superb little utility which allows you to launch programs simply by clicking on the appropriate image.

Implementing a very unique interface, you can create brush images for a particular application and incorporate them into the interface.

Once you have created an appropriate assign (see installation instructions) double-click the AmiDock icon and a set of pre-defined images will appear at the right-hand side of the Workbench screen.

If you click on the square gadget alongside the two arrows you will then be able to access AmiDock's menus. You will also notice that by clicking and holding down the mouse button over the square, you can drag the icons to wherever you want.

The Item menu allows you to add and delete new files as you wish, but you should first design an appropriate icon in your favourite paint package, grab it as a brush and save it to the drawer of your appropriate Workbench resolution – interlace or non-interlace.

With the brush defined you can then add the program into AmiDock. Select Add from the Edit menu and click the Load button. This will allow you to select the file – the file name will be reflected in the Name string. You then select a brush for the application and also choose whether it is a CLI or Workbench program. Once you okay your settings the new program will be attached to the AmiDock interface.



*With AmiDock you can attach image brushes to programs and run them from the Workbench by a single click*

### Installation

Once you have installed AmiDock you must set up an assign in your startup-sequence or user-startup for it to work. Add the following assign:

```
Assign DOCK:
```

e.g.

```
Assign DOCK: ACUtilities:ACUtils/AmiDock/Non-Interlace
```



*Now you need never miss that menu item with the help of MenuStay*

## MenuStay

**Author: Alexander Loghis**

MenuStay is a very small utility that will force the Workbench menus to stay open when you press the right mouse button. They can then be switched back off by clicking the right mouse button once again. To load MenuStay, simply double-click on the icon and to remove it do exactly the same again.

## SuperDuper 3.1

**Author: Sebastiano Vigna**
**Workbench 2 and above only**

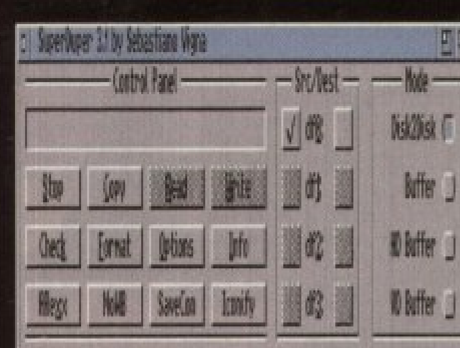
SuperDuper is a lightning fast disk copier and formatter that is far more efficient than the Workbench diskcopy and format routines.

The program also has the ability to buffer disk contents into RAM, which means that if you are duplicating a disk on to several other disks you only need read the source disk once.

Once you have loaded SuperDuper you will be presented with a very attractive user-interface which is divided into three sections.

The first section allows you to choose which function you want to apply to disks – whether it be copying, formatting or checking – the mid -section provides buttons to select the source and destination drives and the last section offers several modes allowing you to change the way in which the data is copied, formatted and checked. When performing an operation, you can click on the Info buttons which will display the progress of the current operation and any information that may prove useful.

You can also select preferences regarding SuperDuper's functions and storage areas by clicking the Options button and changing the buttons. These preferences can then be saved by clicking SaveCon.




*If you want a lightning fast disk copier, formatter and checker you got it. Nothing rivals SuperDuper for speed*

## DMSWorkBench

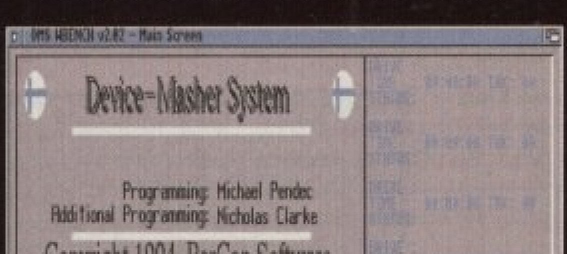
**Author: ParCon Software**

Originally, DMS was written as a CLI program which when run provided the user with somewhat confusing instructions on how to actually compress and decompress disks.

Fortunately, ParCon Software has come to the rescue by providing a user-friendly, intuition interface for DMS which provides a series of gadgets that allow complete control over DMS, without the need for constantly referring back to the command syntax.

When you first load up DMSWorkBench you are greeted by an attractive looking interface with a series of buttons. The most useful of these buttons is Read and Write. These allow you to actually compress and decompress disks with the minimum amount of fuss.

When you click on the Read button you will be asked for a filename and location where the eventual compressed disk file should be stored. Users of 1Mb RAM are not advised to save their DMS files to RAM.




*You can bring a welcome face-lift to DMS with DMS Workbench. Compress and decompress disks with ease*

When you have decided this, click on the Drive button to set the target drive and then on Start to begin compression.

To the right-hand side of the interface you will be able to monitor the progress of compression, including the current track being compressed and the time taken. Any errors will also be flashed.

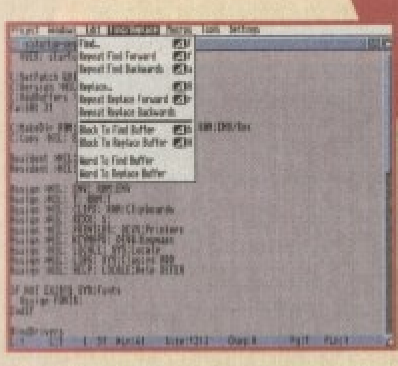
Write works in much the same way – you select the DMS file you wish to decompress, the disk drive you wish to decompress to and then click on Start to begin.

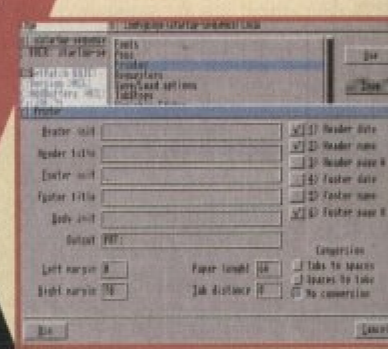
You can also compress and decompress high density and PC disks by clicking on the appropriately labelled button.

# Stay on the frontier of editing power

## with the Edge 2.0 upgrade

*Engrossed by our Edge 2.0 CoverDisk? Then make sure you take it all the way with the full package, including manual, for the special offer price of just $75 (include $15 for shipping).*





**Edge 2.0 is a text editor with configurable power that is unmatched. When it comes to working on AmigaDOS scripts and the like, this is the software to choose.**

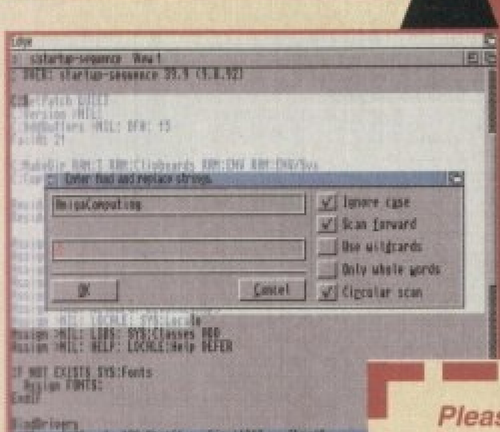
*The Edge's features include:*

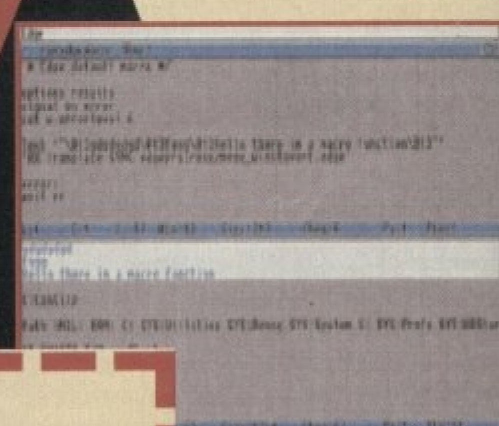
● Full ARexx support ● Asynchronous editor windows – use multiple windows at the same time ● Memory Pooling improves loading and editing speed Named bookmarks ● On-line help ● Vast configurability

*What you get for your money:*

● Full manual – vital if you're to explore the full possibilities of The Edge. ● No limits – the CoverDisk is limited to a text size of 32k, but with the upgrade there are no such barriers ● Toolbar – speeds up common tasks with icons ● Configure Save button – unavailable on the demo, this is enabled for the real thing.

*After December 15th you will not be able to use your demo. Buy the upgrade and make sure you don't lose that Edge.*





## Edge 2.0 order form

*Please send me Edge 2.0 (the full product)*
Deliver to...

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) ______________________

Address ______________________

Postcode __________ Daytime Telephone __________

*Complete the coupon and return it to;*

***Europe***

INOVAtronics GmbH, Lise-Meitner-Str. 1, 85716 Unterschleissheim, Germany

*You can order by card on:* **Tel: 010 49 89 3173164 Fax: 010 49 89 3174957**

Payable by credit card (Visa, EuroCard & American Express)

Card no. [ ] Expiry date [ / ]

***Rest of World***

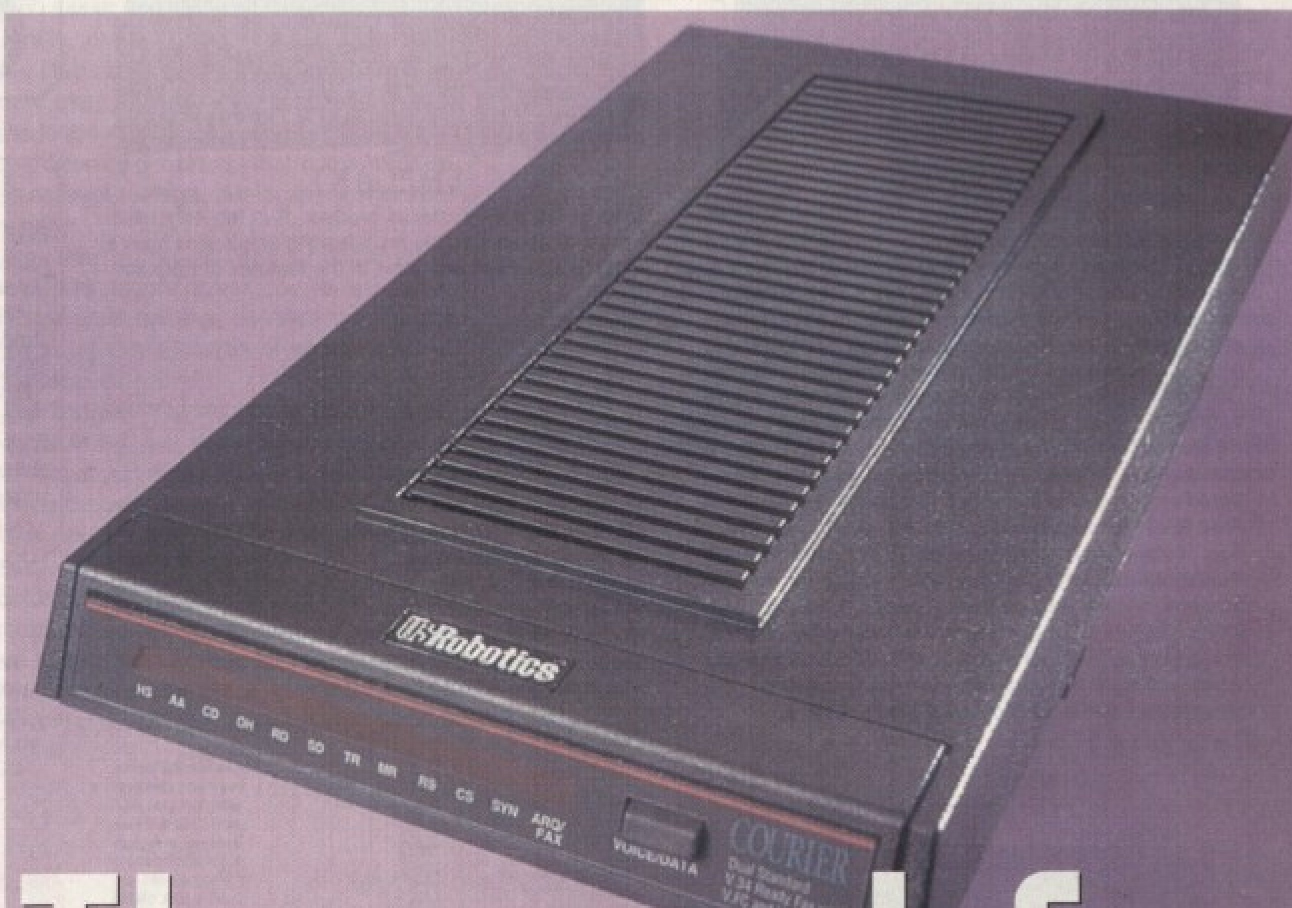
INOVAtronics Inc, 8499 Greenville Ave.#209B, Dallas, TX 75231

*You can order by card on:* **Tel: 010 1 214 340 4991 Fax: 010 1 214 240 8514**

Payable by credit card (Visa, EuroCard & American Express)

Card no. [ ] Expiry date [ / ]

INOVAtronics and *Amiga Computing* will hopefully be able to offer non-credit card holders the chance to upgrade in the near future, at which point you will be notified in the magazine




# The need for speed

*Phil South looks at the latest in 28.8 technology from US Robotics*

It's an undeniable fact that modems are getting fast. V. Fast in fact, as this is the latest standard to which every modem user aspires.

The first modem out there with this standard was the Supra model reviewed last issue, and this new Courier model is US Robotics answer to that, if indeed the Supra was a question.

V. Fast modems operate at 28,800 baud, an extreme turn of speed for the information hungry '90s, and a baud rate unsurpassed in the history of comms.

This is double the speed of the fastest modems available, and they in turn were double the speed of the previous models. You have to ask yourself where all this is going to end?

Modems which are so fast they download the file, of any size, virtually instantly? A 2Mb download in the time it takes to click the mouse? It seems impossible now but think about it.

The modem I have next to my Amiga is seven times faster than the first modem I owned, and that was only seven years ago. If the speed of modems doubles every year or so, where will we be in another seven years? The 3,686,400 baud modem will be a reality, for sure, and probably faster still.

## VERSATILE

The current crop of modems are fast, you got that bit right, but they also have another bunch of features to do with what modems do as well as sit there being modems.

Most modems are now also fax machines, enabling users to send and receive faxes to and from their computers. No modem worth the name has anything less than fax ability.

But these new modems have other features in common too. The Courier is a 28,800 baud modem, in the V. Fast class and, like many other modems of this class, is software upgradable. Special software can load itself into EPROMS in the unit to upgrade the software in the machine to a higher standard.

US Robotics has a BBS in the US which carries software upgrades for the modems. It has a quick connect feature, which cuts the "training" time, like when the modem connects to a service.

Usually this can rage between nine and 20 seconds with a conventional modem, but with the V. Fast, when you're on, you're on.

The modem not only auto adjusts its connect rate to match the incoming signal, but also it has ASL, or adaptive speed levelling, allowing the modem to change speeds for more reliable signals while it is on-line. (Normally if you had to change rates you had to disconnect and reconnect after you'd adjusted the speed.)

It has fax ability, as both a class 1 and class 2 fax software. As yet class 2 software is only available for the Supra (if memory serves), although it shouldn't be long until the guys at Greg Perry Software come up with a new version of GPFax to match these new machines.

There is a button on the front of the machine which has a unique function. It is the voice/data toggle switch, and this enables you to switch from voice to data without issuing an AT command.

Although most phones allow you to use the modem and use the phone one after the other without a problem, some phone/modem combinations have a problem with handset exclusion.

This enables you to switch from data to voice and back again, as some units have a problem with that, and you may not be able to get back to data once you've switched to voice.

You can only do this when the modem is off-line. If you are on-line and you hit the voice switch, you will terminate the data line. The button also enables you to set the modem for remote access, if you want to call the modem and access your computer from a remote site.

## Sexy or wot?

**Is this the best modem ever? Well, okay it is sleek and black and sexy looking, and it is one of the fastest things on four little rubber feet. It's very flat too, so it can sit under your phone.**

**Erm, well at least if your phone has enough clearance underneath, as there is a big ridge on top of the modem and on my phone it lifted the rubber feet on the phone off the surface, meaning that the phone just slid around on top.**

**But that's a petty niggle, as I usually sit a disk drive or a pot of pens on top of the modem anyway.**

**Modems are really coming down in price, as there was a time when the next big thing, which V. Fast certainly is, would be at least six times more expensive than the current workaday standard. But it's now cheaper than ever before to get into V. Fast comms.**

# In the best of health

*Files not found, crashing hard drives and cryptic messages. Do any of these sound familiar? Frank Nord dons his white coat and patches up your Amiga*

As many of my friends will tell you, I am pretty disorganised in life. Sure, I like neatness, but I'd rather someone else took care of it for me. I'm the sort of person who only does the washing up when there are no more clean plates.

But on my machine I'm as strict as a drill sargeant. I know where to find every file on my machine and nothing gets introduced to my machine unless I know where it should be put.

I guess this tidiness is an obsession made worse by the number of machines I tend to that are completely disorganised. Amiga owners have it easy in a number of ways I'll go into later, but they seem the worst of the bunch most of the time.

I've visited clients and not been even able to put stuff on their machine because I don't know where it should go, and worse still, neither did they!

Hopefully this article should be able to help anyone with a hard drive-equipped Amiga to be a little tidier with very little effort (and make my job easier to boot!).

Firstly, many of you reading this article know little about AmigaDOS and care less. That's okay, you don't need to know. For those interested there is a boxout detailing all those different directories that come as standard on every Amiga, but for the rest of you, rest easy.

I'm not going to get you to write AmigaDOS scripts or ask you to remember obscure shell commands. Well, you might need to type in a couple of sentences, but that's all.

The first way that the Amiga beats the PC and Macintosh lies in the assign command. This allows you to get access to the files you want quickly and easily.

Say you do a lot of graphics work, pictures, animations, brushes and so on. Wouldn't it be easy if, instead of having to go through all the different drawers of your hard drive picking files here and there, you could have them all in one place, easily accessible from any program that needs them? Well, it is easy. All you need to do is make an assign. The way to make an assign is to create a drawer on your hard drive called, for the sake of argument, Bitmaps.

Done that? Okay then, now all you need to do to assign that drawer is to open a shell window and type:

```
Assign Bitmaps: ****:Bitmaps
```

where **** represents the name of the hard drive where you put the Bitmaps drawer.

Now if you go into any paint, image processing or animation ➤



program and hit the Volumes button when you use the file requester you should see Bitmaps: in the list.

The best thing of all is it will take the same amount of mouse clicks to reach no matter where it is on you hard drive. The only problem is that when you reboot there won't be a "bitmaps: assign" again unless you retype it in the Shell.

I'm sure you don't really want to have to do that, so the best way around it is to edit the User-Startup file. To do so just open a Shell window – I won't get you to do this much more, I promise – and type:

```
Ed S:User-startup
```

Once you have hit the return key a new window should open up. It might say at the bottom "Creating new file" if you haven't had your Amiga long, but the chances are that it will have some text in it already.

Just move the cursor down to the bottom of the file and add the "Assign Bitmaps:" line we already tried. While you're in there you might want to add some more assigns. Table I shows you some to get you started

Whatever is simplest usually works best. After all, you might end up searching through an enormous list of assigns to try and find the one you want, which rather defeats the object of the whole exercise.

Now, every time you boot your machine you will have all those convenient assigns.

The location of the drawer is unimportant because you will never have to search through the normal route to reach it – no more DH1:OtherStuff/Things/wossnames/newbits/DPaint/Pictures...

- Bitmaps: for pictures
- Anims: for animations
- Brushes:for brushes (you might want to put these in Bitmaps instead, seeing as they are pictures in their own right)
- Docs: for DTP documents or word processed letters
- Text: for ASCII text files
- WP: for word processed files
- Sheets: for spreadsheet files
- Downloads: for Comms, to put all your downloaded files into
- Uploads: same again for files for uploading. You might even want to separate the files another way, say Homework: or by a clients name.

***Table I***

> You might end up searching through an enormous list of assigns to try and find the one you want

## PARTITIONS

By the way, before you reboot to take advantage of all those great assigns you've just made, make sure you have created the necessary drawers for them. There now, that wasn't so painful was it? And I promise that I won't get you to use the Shell again.

Onto the next phase in reorganisation. This is a bit of a two-parter. The first bit is standard to any Amiga. First of all, let's assume most of you have the standard two partitions that hard drive-equipped Amigas come with, normally Workbench: and Work: for A600, A1200 and A4000 owners.

If you only have one partition most of this stuff is going to be redundant, but don't stop reading. If you have loads of little partitions, what are you doing? Each partition you have chews up extra RAM and reduces the overall size of your hard drive.

Try to keep the number of partitions to a minimum if you have a hard drive under 100MB. Even if you've got a really big drive you shouldn't need to have too many partitions.

I have about 1.3GB of storage and only have four partitions: Workbench:, Work:, Other: and Data:. Other: has all the stuff that can't be classified in it and games; Data: contains exactly that, pictures, anims, PageStream documents, text files, etc.; Workbench: has all my Workbench files and tools in it, and Work: contains all the programs I need to use to create all the files in Data:.

The first thing is that your Workbench: partition is really small, right? Between 5

## The Tools menu

In Workbench 2 there is a Tools menu at the top of your screen. If you have just bought your Amiga it is quite likely that this menu only contains the command "ResetWB".

If you've had your machine for longer you might have already got either ToolManager, ToolsDaemon or one of the other Tools menu utilities in your WBStartup drawer.

These programs are commodities that allow you to put your favourite programs in the Tools menu or create new menus of your own to put your programs in. This saves all the hassle of having to click through endless drawers trying to find the programs you want to run.

I use a combination of both ToolManager and ToolsDaemon to give

## It's all LIBS: and DEVS:

If you are confused about all the different drawers with cryptic names on your Workbench partition, then read on. Your Workbench disk consists of various essential drawers necessary for the successful operation of Workbench.

Listing them alphabetically, the first we come to is C:. This drawer contains all the AmigaDOS commands used in the Shell, or by the startup-sequence and user-startup.

Some C: commands over the years have been moved from the C: directory and put into the Kickstart ROM, which is why looking for the Echo command, for instance, is a waste of time.

There are no icons for any of these files because the programs they represent are not used from the Workbench, but only from the Shell.

If you are running Workbench 3 the next drawer we come to is Classes. Classes contains various items to do with running Workbench, the main ones being datatypes for use with Multiview (and any other datatype-supporting program), and gadgets for object-oriented programming.

These gadgets are things like the colour gradient wheel in the Preferences program "Palette". They make it easier for programmers to incorporate standard features in their programs without having to recreate them from scratch.

The next drawer in our list is DEVS: This name is short for devices and is inside other drawers pertaining to the various devices attached to or part of your Amiga – for instance, monitor drivers, printer drivers or keyboard drivers.

In the main part of DEVS: there are also files; the actual device drivers themselves, serial.device, parallel.device and printer.device and various others. If you used ParNET, your parnet.device and parnet mountlist would go in DEVS:.

Next up is Expansion. This doesn't get used as much these days as it did under Workbench 1.3 but is similar to DEVS: in that it is used to hold drivers for additional hardware like hard drive controllers or graphics cards.

### COMMANDS

This drawer is more than likely empty on your machine. When your Amiga boots, a command is issued in the startup-sequence called binddrivers.

This loads all the .device programs in DEVS: along with the selected printer, monitor and keyboard drivers. It also then looks in the Expansion drawer to see if there is anything in there, and if there is, it loads that too.

On to L:. L: isn't used as much these days either. It used to be where the disk validator lived, along with various other essentials which have now been incorporated into Kickstart.

It still holds "handlers" which are similar to .device programs. It doesn't have an icon because there is no point loading the programs manually as they are all set up on booting.

LIBS: is our next port of call in this tour of Workbench. LIBS: (short for libraries surprisingly enough) is where our Amiga scores another advantage over other systems.

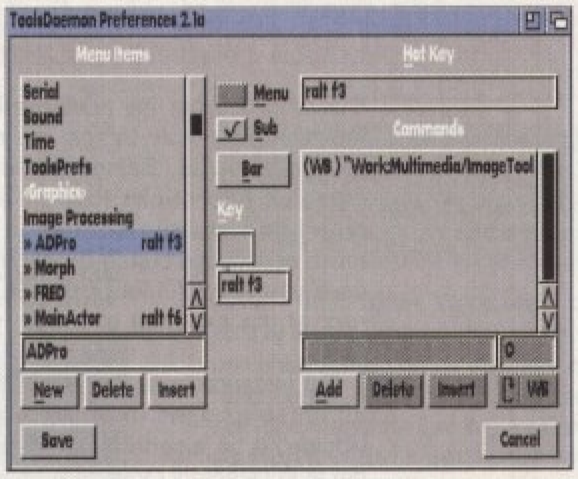
The Amiga uses a set of linked libraries that can be used by any program. They only get loaded as necessary and even if several programs are using the same library, that library only needs to be loaded once.

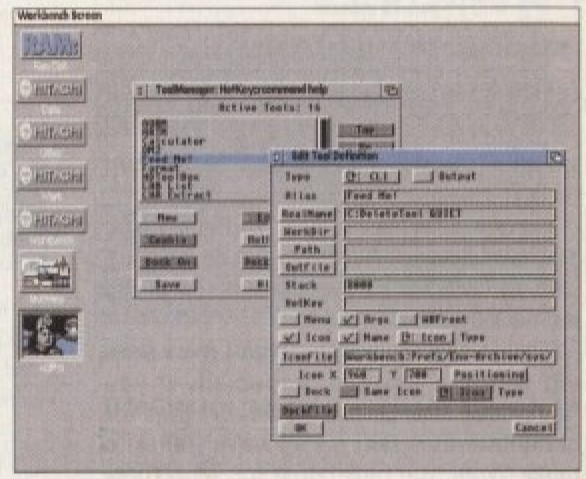
Libraries are programs that never need to be loaded manually, hence the lack of an icon for this drawer or the files inside.

If you are running Workbench 2.1 or higher the next drawer we come to is Locale. Locale makes your Amiga more user-friendly to chums all across the globe.

Next on our list of interesting places to visit on your Workbench disk is Prefs. This is the most used drawer on many people's hard drive as they choose all sorts of garish patterns for Workbench backdrops, change their fonts for menus and icons, or show people how silly a mouse pointer they can create.

Inside the Prefs drawer resides another



*Whether you choose Toolmanager or ToolsDaemon (or both), they will certainly speed up Workbench operation*

me programs in the Tools menu and seven other menus including Prefs; which has all the preferences programs in it, and Graphics; which has all my paint and animation tools, including a sub-menu for 3D programs that I use regularly.

One of the nicest things about both these programs is that you don't have to type anything in to get your programs running – all you have to do is drag the icon for the program you want to run into the ToolManager or ToolsDaemon window and that's it.

## BONUS

As an added bonus for ToolManager users, it is possible to create a dock window or place icons on the Workbench screen. The dock can be spread horizontally or vertically and can have its items duplicated in the menu.

Finally, a couple of tips for using these programs. Make sure you pay careful attention to the "Work Directory:" setting in ToolManager. If you are using a program that only uses one sort of file, text say, then you can set the "WorkDirectory:" to your Text: assign.

This means that when you load up your text editor from the menu, whenever you open a file the file requester will automatically start in your Text: directory.

With ToolsDaemon you can actually perform more than one action with a single menu click. By entering items manually in the right-hand window of ToolsDaemon you can build up a list of events that occur.

You might want to change screenmode and your mouse pointer at the same time, or make an assign only when you run a particular program. It's very easy.

and 8MB? Well, that's just not big enough if you're going to have lots of fonts, ARexx scripts and Tools is it?

The only way to get around it is to move all those files elsewhere, or to limit what you put on your hard drive. Now, I don't believe in limiting myself, so I'd rather go for the former than the latter, but it's up to you.

And I know I promised not to have to make you use the Shell again, but if you want your machine to be in tip-top condition you're just going to have to edit that startup-sequence.

So, open a Shell window and type:

```
Ed S:Startup-sequence
```

and hit return. This time there should definitely be some text extant in the file. Now look out for the bit where all the assigns crop up. There should be one for FONTS:, one for REXX: and a path statement for Tools.

We'll deal with the REXX: assign first as it's the easiest. Simply change the line to read:

```
Assign REXX: ****:ARexx
```

where **** is the name of your larger hard drive partition. This actually helps in more ways than one.

Firstly, it will stop your Workbench partition from getting clogged up and secondly you might have noticed that, by default, REXX: is assigned to S:.

Well, S: is where your startup-sequence, user-startup and other similar files are located and if you end up with umpteen ARexx scripts in the same drawer it's going to make it tough to find your user-startup when you want it. Again, do remember to create the ARexx drawer where you have assigned it.

The part of the startup-sequence where FONTS: are assigned looks a little more complex what with all the "If exists" statements, but they don't really matter. Just cut out these lines:

```
IF NOT EXISTS SYS:Fonts  Assign FONTS: EndIF
```

➤

important directory by the name of Env-Archive. Env-Archive (which has the assign ENVARC:) contains all the settings for Workbench, as well as quite a few other programs.

Every time you boot your machine whatever is in ENVARC: gets copied to a directory called ENV: in RAM. This is to allow temporary seetings in programs.

For instance choosing Use rather than Save in any of the Preferences programs will result in a file being saved in ENV: rather than ENVARC: so that when you reboot it is lost.

After Prefs comes Rexxc which is far less interesting. Rexxc is the place where the ARexx server programs reside and gets a visit from most Amiga users about as often as Outer Mongolia.

## SCRIPTS

Slipping out of Rexxc we drop hurriedly into S:. S is for scripts and that is what we find in here. The two main inhabitants are the Startup-sequence and user-startup which are the scripts to tell the Amiga what to do when it is booting.

After S: on some machines running Workbench 2.1 or higher there comes Storage. This is a storeroom for unwanted files in DEVS:. It holds all the other printer keyboard and monitor drivers that aren't currently being used.

Once you have found your Storage disk we'll




*The colour wheel and slider in this window are examples of gadgets*

move onto the System drawer. The system drawer contains, for the most part, programs that might make more sense being in the C: drawer.

Some of the programs, of course, need to be available via icons, and that is why they reside here. You should find Shell, Format and RexxMast in here, among others.

After System comes T: for temp. T: is usually assigned to RAM: so you probably won't find much in here. Files you find in here immediately after a reboot can be deleted as they are temporary files created by some program or other that haven't been cleared up, either because the machine crashed or you rebooted without closing everything down first.

Following that, the Tools drawer looms up. If you are really short on space a lot of the programs in Tools can be deleted. If for instance you are not the proud owner of an A600 or A1200 you can merrily rid yourself of the PrepCard tool as it applies only to machines with a PCMCIA slot.

CMD, GraphicDump and PrintFiles have all got replacements inside other programs, and MEmacs is a text editor based on the Unix standard EMacs. It too can be deleted if you are already using another program to edit text files.

Our penultimate stopover is Utilities. This drawer contains More; the text reader, a clock and, if you are running Workbench 3, Multiview.

Last but definitely not least, is WBStartup. When your Amiga boots it looks into this drawer and runs any programs it finds there. Most programs that get put into WBStartup are called Commodities and are useful little tools like screenblankers, virus checkers or Workbench improvers.

If you are not sure about where to put files and the documentation accompanying them gives you no clues, it is not usually a good idea just to shove them into C: or LIBS: or whatever.

and replace them with this line:

```
Assign Fonts: ****:fonts
```

where **** is the name of your larger hard drive partition.

Okay, that's that sorted. Did you make the fonts drawer? The last part of messing with the startup-sequence deals with the path statement for Tools.

This is slightly less important than dealing with the assigns, especially if you never use the Shell. However, just for completeness sake, if you are going to make Work: the new home for your Tools drawer, simply change the path statement from:

```
Path >NIL: RAM: C: SYS:Utilities SYS:Rexxc
SYS:System S: SYS:Prefs SYS:WBStartup SYS:Tools
SYS:Tools/Commodities
```

to:

```
Path >NIL: RAM: C: SYS:Utilities SYS:Rexxc
SYS:System S: SYS:Prefs SYS:WBStartup Work:Tools
Work:Tools/Commodities
```

Right, now that we've done all this editing we're half-way to a better system. Did I only say half-way? Yes, because unless you've been doing stuff behind my back you haven't yet copied all the files you need into the new locations we've been creating.

So now just transfer all your fonts to your new font drawer, all your ARexx scripts to your ARexx drawer (this one might be tougher as you'll have to be able to tell the difference between an ARexx script and an ordinary AmigaDOS script. The easiest way to work it out is that ARexx scripts *always* start with the characters /* ).

You should also take some time moving all your pictures, text files, spreadsheets, and so on into the new assigned drawers you have created.

## MANAGEMENT

If you are sitting there right now wondering how on earth you are going to do all this file moving you obviously don't have any sort of file management program.

If you don't, shame on you. Uncle Frank's rule number one: If you've got a hard drive, you need a file management program. There are plenty of them out there, some are free and others cost dosh and I've listed a few of each in a boxout later on.

Go to it. Once you have finished moving all the files around that you need you should be ready for a reboot. You should now have a hard drive that isn't difficult to navigate, and as long as you continue to use the Bitmaps: drawer for all your pictures, the Docs: drawer for all your DTP files, and the WP: drawer for all your letters you should find life with your Amiga more productive and even easier than ever.

> Customising your file manager is one of the most profitable things you can do – productivity-wise

## New buttons

Customising your file manager is one of the most profitable things you can do – productivity-wise. Being able to achieve complex operations like de-archiving or editing startup-sequences at the touch of a single button or menu item will save you an awful lot of time in the long run, at the expense of a little tinkering now.

For instance, now that we have set up all those assigns in our User-startup, wouldn't it be nice to make them easy to get at in Directory Opus?

Nothing could be simpler. Go into the configure program and click on the Buttons icon. Find an empty button and click on it.

This should bring up the Button Edit screen. In here you should give your button a name, which should be the assign (let's assume we are working on a Bitmaps: assign, so call the button Bitmaps:), then where you enter what that button does, add the command:

```
Scandir Bitmaps:
```

and hit return. That command should now appear in the command list. Next, hit OK and carry on making as many new buttons as you need.

If you are using a recent revision of Directory Opus, you can actually put two commands on a single button by using either the left or right mouse button to select it which will double up the number of assigns you can comfortably fit on your Dopus screen.

DiskMaster owners don't have it so good in this regard. I can't seem to create the Cmd Menu commands to get the same functionality, but never mind.

With DiskMaster, however, you can arrange matters so that every time you load DiskMaster it will have the same directory list up as the last time you quit.

The only caveat with this method is that you should keep a backup of your Startup.DM file in case you do something wrong, quit and it gets saved that way.

All you need do now is edit the start-up.dm file and where the Quit menu item is you should change it so that the line reads:

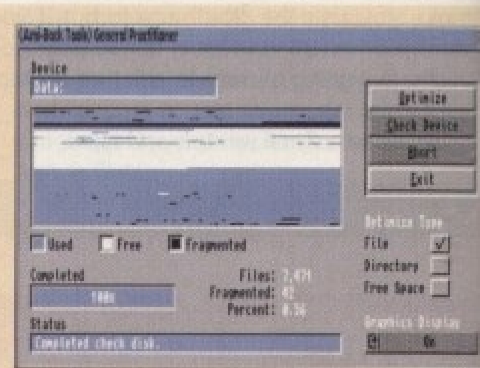
```
AddMenu Project, Quit, Q, SaveConfig
Tools:Startup.DM;Quit
```

You might also want to put the following line in after:

## HDTools

To complement the list of useful commodities elsewhere on these pages, here are some useful, if not essential, hard drive utilities. You should definitely have at least one in each of the following categories, both on your hard drive and on floppy should your hard drive fail.

**Backup software** – I know backing up's a drag and seems like a waste of time and disks, but it is a good idea to at least make a backup prior to changing the status of your hard drive, repartitioning it for instance. Backup software available includes:



*This partition hardly needs optimisation*

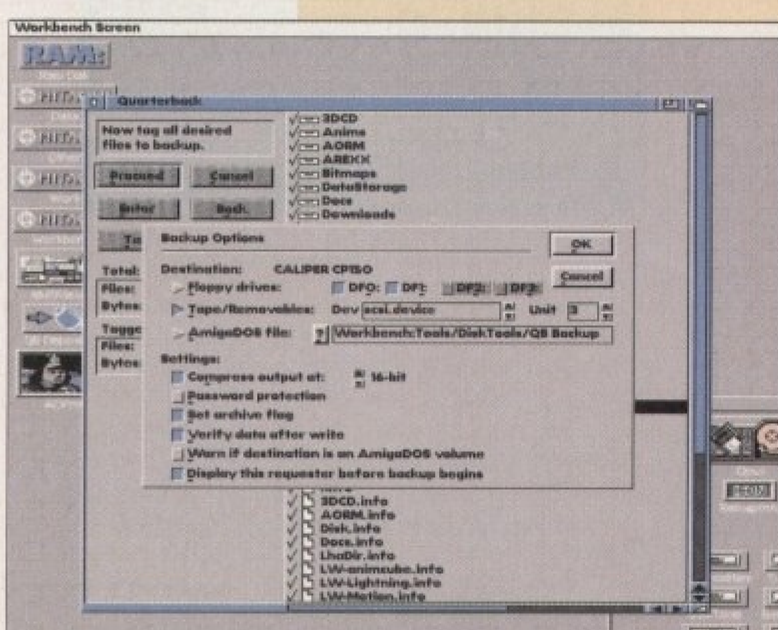
- HDBackup: free with hard drive-based Amigas. Not very good, but will do at a pinch.
- Quarterback: Getting better all the time. Now up to version 6 and can at last do multiple volume backups. Support for tape streamers is very good with excellent back-up rates.
- Ami-Back: My choice of backup software. Not as fast as Quarterback, but can perform multiple backups and comes with a scheduler to give you reminders of when to back up your hard drive, and which will perform that backup automatically if desired.

**Utility software** – This section includes optimisation, file recovery, crashed disk recovery and disk wiping.

**Ami-Back Tools** – Companion to Ami-Back, this program handles all the categories mentioned and can also save Rigid Disk Block information in a file.

**Upper Disk Tools** – A novel idea and beautifully executed, Upper Disk Tools uses the

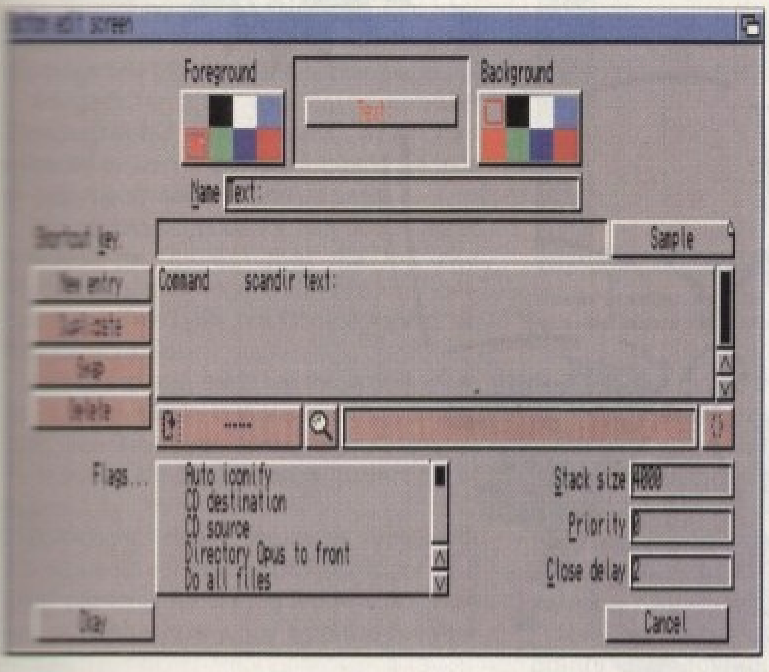
*Quarterback is extremely fast at backing up to tape*



```
...Menu Project, Quit No Save, Quit just in case"
```

This is just a very small sample of the customisation that can be done with these programs. Other suggestions would be to create links for either program to be able to show AmigaGuide documents, show GIF, PCX and Jpeg pictures or display FAXX files.

*Making a button to let me get at this text file easier*




Device metaphor to create a new device which acts like a hard drive and can be used to recover lost files or reorganise data.

**DiskSalv** – By Dave Haynie, an ex-Commodore member of staff and all round good egg. DiskSalv is a shareware product purely for the recovery of files. It does a very good job of it and is actually faster than Ami-Back Tools at bringing loved files back from the dead.

**Quarterback Tools Deluxe** – A much needed update to the original Quarterback Tools which was first released, if memory serves, in 1989. This shares the "New Horizons" look and feel of Quarterback and adds encryption to the list of useful functions it can perform.

**HDToolbox** – Commodore's own brand hard drive installation software. The newer revisions bundled with Workbench 2.04 and up can also be used with other people's hard drive controllers. By simply adding the following tooltype to the icon, owners of GVP, IVS and other manufacturer's controllers can use it:

```
SCSI_DEVICE_NAME=***
```

where *** is the name of the device driver in DEVS: ie. gvpscsi.device RDPrep:

A freely distributable hard drive installation tool written by Microbotics to allow people with A1200s to buy a hard drive at a later date and be able to install it without requiring Commodore's software. The software is very comprehensive, if a little confusing at times.

## Other tools

Here are some of my favourite time-saving commodities. You might not want to use them all if your machine is lacking in memory, drive space or processor power.

**ARQ** – This makes Workbench look a lot prettier with animated requesters popping up centre screen rather than in the top left-hand corner. You can also use the Return key for OK and the Esc key for Cancel.

**AssignX** – Ever get those annoying requesters popping up saying "Please insert volume blah in any drive...?" AssignX gives you new options apart from Retry and Cancel. The most important is Assign. Hitting this button will bring up a file requester allowing you to assign volume Blah to whatever directory you choose.

**ClickToFront** – One of the only Commodore-supplied commodities that I use, it is at its most useful when you change the tooltype to read: "QUALIFIER=NONE". This way, double-clicking on a window will bring it to the front of the stack.

**CycleToMenu2** – This changes cycle gadgets into those nifty little pop-up menus you see on other machines.

**FOCO** – or Format Controller. With this commodity installed, inserting an unformatted floppy into a drive will bring up a requester asking if you wish to format it. FOCO's only downside is that it doesn't offer a facility to format DCFS disks.

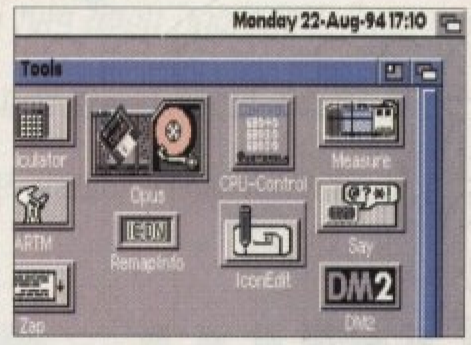
**MagicMenu** – This terrific tool lets you use your right mouse button to bring up menus anywhere on the screen.

**MFR** – Magic File Requester is just that. If a program uses the standard ASL file requester, Req or ReqTools requesters, MFR replaces them with its own. MFR has customisable positioning, fonts and even scrollbars, but its most useful feature is the ability to delete or rename files and make directories while its window is open.

**SwazInfo** – Only for users of Workbench 3 and up. It replaces the normal icon information window with a much better one, giving drag and drop facilities for changing the icon image, networking ownership bits (not too useful, this one) and various other features.



*As you can see, I'm having a little trouble with fonts in ProPage here.*




*Damn handy that TitleClock!*

**TitleClock** – I've been waiting for this tool for a very long time. I had always seen that on other machines that didn't have the multiple screen philosophy of the Amiga, titlebar clocks were always available. Well now there's one for the Amiga too. It will jump to the frontmost screen at all times and has a very configurable date/time.

**ToolManager & ToolsDaemon** – The best aid to productivity. Look around these pages for the boxout about them.

**VirusChecker** – John Veldthuis' VirusChecker is a program no hard drive owner should be without. It's better to be safe than sorry.

Along with these commodities, a few of the Shell-based utilities I would not be without include:

**KingCon** – A replacement for the CON: device that gives drag and drop directory manipulation, command line history, name completion and saveable buffer, among other benefits.

**InstallNewAlert** – Whenever your Amiga crashes you get a red alert box with two cryptic numbers in it. One is the task that caused the crash, the other is the reason it caused the crash. InstallNewAlert gives you these facts in plain English.

**FontCacheX** – Got an enormous fontlist? FontcacheX puts it into RAM: so although the first time you check your fonts directory it will take the same time as normal, subsequent reads will be much swifter, in some cases almost instantaneous. A great help if you are using DPaint or changing the style of your Workbench.

**Move** – This Shell command does exactly what it says, it moves files (what did you expect?).

**SnoopDOS** – Don't you just hate it when you have a program that just won't run and you can't figure out why? Well, SnoopDOS should be able to help out with problems of this sort, and as such is a necessity for all hard drive owners (especially as it is a Public Domain program).

What is it? Well, as you should be able to see from the picture, SnoopDOS resembles a shell window with current tasks scrolling upwards through it. SnoopDOS will tell you what files a program is looking for and, more importantly, will inform you if there are any failures to load or open a file. Because SnoopDOS gives a path, it means it is usually pretty easy to see where any problems you are having lie.

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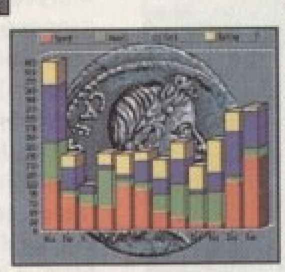
**Wordprocessor:** Compose a letter, check your spelling with the 50,000 word dictionary, mailmerge details from a database file, add graphics, wrap text around it, load ASCII text, highlight with bold, italic and underline... and more!



**Database:** Build up a versatile card index, incorporate up to 50 fields with 70 characters each, use search and replace to modify data, do powerful multi-field sorting, perform arithmetic functions... and more!



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**Graphics:** Enter data directly or load from the spreadsheet or database; produce pie charts with exploded segments; display bar charts side by side or stacked; overlay your graphs on an imported IFF picture; add a 3D view; add text or lines... and more!



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europress SOFTWARE

Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 4NP, Tel: 0625 859333

Mini Office works on all Amigas with 1 megabyte RAM, can read Amiga IFF files and for US users, fully supports the NTSC standard.

# Paving the way

*TypeSmith has been upgraded. Now you can use every popular font in existence. Denny Atkin reveals all*

If you use your Amiga for anything besides blasting Space Spuds from Planet Londo, then you'll appreciate the importance of quality fonts. For desktop publishers they make the difference between bland, look-alike documents and attention-grabbing designs.

Video producers require fonts that are clean enough to be read on fuzzy TV displays, but distinctive enough to grab attention. Early versions of AmigaDOS supported only low-resolution bitmapped fonts, which were fine for screen display (if the font happened to come in the size you needed), but looked terribly blocky on the printed page.

AmigaDOS 2.04 and later support Compugraphic outline fonts, which can easily be resized to provide top-notch results on both the screen and printed page.

The perfect panacea for font users, right? It would be, except that the PC and Macintosh platforms standardize on PostScript and TrueType, not Compugraphic, as their font formats.

Because of this, there are thousands more typefaces available in those formats, ranging from free TrueType fonts to professional PostScript fonts that cost hundreds of dollars.

Soft-Logik's newly upgraded TypeSmith 2.5 lets you convert both PostScript and TrueType fonts for use on the Amiga – now you can find virtually any typeface for your Amiga.

TypeSmith allows you to design your own typeface and save it in any supported format.

In fact, TypeSmith is primarily a font design and modification editor, although many Amigans use it primarily for font conversion, making only minor tweaks to typefaces.

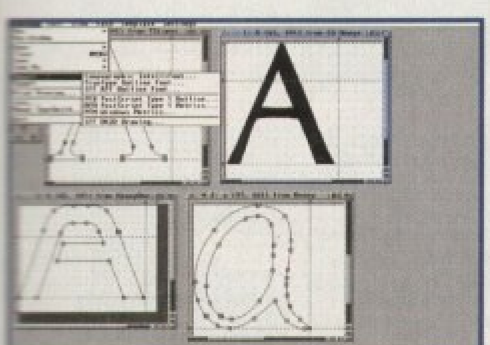
## TRUETYPE

The biggest improvement to version 2.5 is the addition of TrueType support. TrueType is the font standard used by both the PC's Windows 3.1 and the Macintosh's System 7.

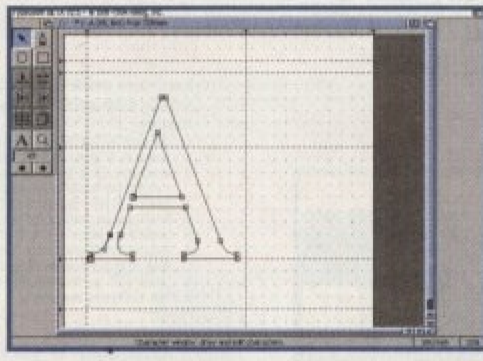
The ability to convert TrueType fonts to Compugraphic or PostScript formats gives you access to a huge library of inexpensive fonts.

TypeSmith has always supported PostScript import (Type 1) and export (Types 1 and 3). Release 2.5 features significantly better hinting for PostScript fonts.

The program will also load and save IFF DR2D drawings (allowing you to create or modify characters in a drawing program, or import clip art into a font), and load (but not save) fonts in the original PageStream font format. The program's native font format is



*Instant fonts in any style, and all with total contrast via splines*



*Looks familiar, but it's all change inside the software*

RFF, an IFF format that allows for very fast loading and saving, but is so far only used by TypeSmith.

You can also load and save bitmapped fonts (standard Amiga bitmaps, PostScript ABF, or Soft-Logik format), as well as Amiga IFF bitmap pictures (useful if you want to scan a printed typeface).

New commands to remove unnecessary points and correct path directions to PostScript standard are handy for both converted and traced fonts.

TypeSmith's font editing features aren't changed in this version, but they were already pretty complete to begin with.

Using an interface similar to PageStream's, with multiple editing windows and a floating tool bar, you can load one or many fonts, and simultaneously display multiple characters from each font.

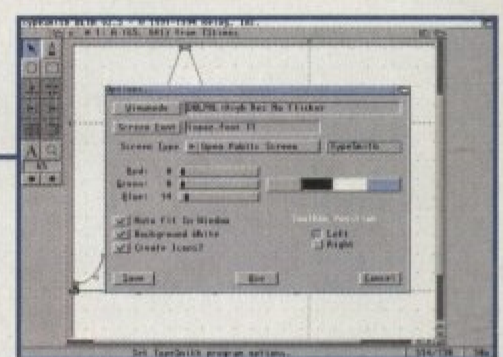
You can copy, cut, and paste characters from one font to another, a feature useful for adding missing characters, such as the pound or copyright symbols, to incomplete fonts.

Outline fonts are edited using splines. You can also create and edit bitmap fonts, although TypeSmith's features are geared more for outline use.

Characters can be rotated, flipped, or skewed (useful as a start for creating an italic font) individually or throughout the entire font. A help bar at the bottom of the window always displays the function of the gadget under the mouse, making it easy to learn how to use these features.

If you want to sample your handiwork, TypeSmith allows you to print samples of your fonts. Earlier versions of the program would only print individual characters or a limited sample of the characters.

Version 2.5 will print a complete font reference sheet, with samples of all the characters printed next to their ASCII values.



*Thanks to the new version you can now get a complete print-out of your entire character set*

## Almost perfect

**TypeSmith is the only game in town when it comes to creating and converting outline fonts on the Amiga, so Soft-Logik could easily have rested on their laurels and expected it to sell itself.**

**Instead, the company has taken an already good program and made it nearly perfect. There are still a few nits to pick – autotrace could be made a bit smarter, for instance – but overall it's a wonderful program.**

**If you use your Amiga for desktop publishing or video titling, this program is a must-have, as it opens the door to using virtually every popular font in existence on your favourite computer.**

**And if you own a PC or Mac along with your Amiga, or use an emulator, you can use TypeSmith to convert typefaces, so you can have access to the same typefaces on all the platforms you use.**

## SYSTEM ESSENTIALS

**RED** = Essential **BLACK** = Recommended

- 2.0 Workbench
- 2 Mb Memory (512 k chip)
- 2 Mb Memory (1MB+ chip)
- Hard drive

## The bottom line

Product: TypeSmith 2.5
Supplier: Soft-Logik
Price: $199.95
Tel: 314-894-3280

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 8 |
| **Implementation** | 9 |
| **Value for money** | 8 |
| **Overall** | 8 |

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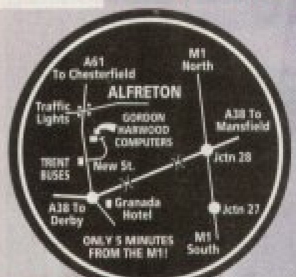
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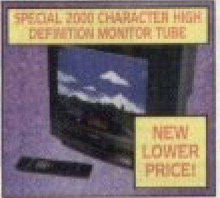
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*MIPS readings taken with RAM fitted. **Price comparisons based on units with 4Mb RAM.

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Viper 68030 Turbo

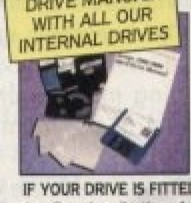
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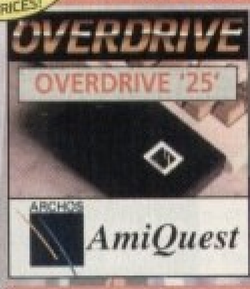
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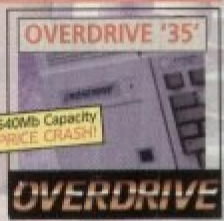



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# Engaging warp




As technology marches ever onward, even an 040 A4000 can be found wanting when it comes to rendering and using other high-end applications. As a result the race is now on to squeeze even more speed from the machine.

As it stands there's two schools of thought. You can either pump up the existing technology or opt for power of Risc technology and parallel processing.

Although the latter offers astonishing performance, way above that of even the fastest 040 or even 060, it does have two major drawbacks, namely huge expense and very limited compatibility.

We'll look at the *risk* options later, and concentrate for the time being on the only approach to 040 acceleration which guarantees compatibility with almost all your existing software, while still delivering rendering speeds – in some cases three times that of a standard 25MHz 040 A4000.

You may well wonder quite how such an increase in performance can be squeezed from an 040 without melting the CPU in its socket.

An obvious option is to increase the MHz of the chip – which in the fastest Warp Engine means swapping your 25MHz chip for an 40MHz.

## MONSTER

Although this would make a difference on its own, it hardly accounts for a near three-fold increase in rendering times. However if you combine such a chip with DMA – direct memory access – actually on the CPU's daughter board, you have the makings of a monster.

Due to the basic design of the A4000 memory access, the motherboard of the machine doesn't even come close to filling the potential of the on-board RAM.

Thanks to the Warp, the RAM being linked directly to the 68040 bus, access leaps by more than a factor of four.

Not surprisingly this means the Warp Engine provides jaw dropping performance. And of course there's the added bonus of a fast SCSI II controller also built directly onto the board. Add all of the above together and you have the fastest all round, none Risc-based acceleration and data transfer system on the Amiga. As anyone who's spent time installing additional hardware will know, actually fitting and configuring hardware can often make you wish you'd saved your money and stuck with what you had.

I must admit, after reading through the installation procedure I had an impending feeling of disaster. In most cases, installing means removing the case and perhaps setting a few jumpers – not this time.

In the case of the Warp there's few, if any, jumpers to be set. However there was the minor inconvenience of dismantling the entire machine.

After getting half-way through, the only thing left in the case was the motherboard. Quite literally everything else was out on the desk.

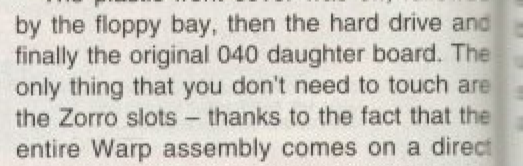
## DISMANTLING

The plastic front cover was off, followed by the floppy bay, then the hard drive and finally the original 040 daughter board. The only thing that you don't need to touch are the Zorro slots – thanks to the fact that the entire Warp assembly comes on a direct replacement for the aforementioned daughter board.

The fact that you can leave your Zorro slots to their own devices – no pun intended – is another bonus of the Warp Engine. Thanks to the daughter board replacement you obviously don't sacrifice a Zorro for the extra speed – and of course the on-board SCSI II controller saves even more valuable Zorros, not to mention cash.

After contracting the usual case of installation rash from the razor sharp pressed steel interior of the machine, it was time to pop in the new daughter board, throw all the bits back together and boot the machine – installation disk at the ready.

Surprise, surprise, it booted first time. I checked the menu bar and all the memory had configured perfectly – things were going a little too well. What the hell, lets try



## Warp options

Although we tested the fastest Warp configuration, there's a number of alternatives including a 28MHz, 33MHz and 40 MHz board. If you're worried about upgrading, USMacroSystems claims it's possible to upgrade from both the 28MHz and 33MHz to the 40MHz very easily.

It's also claimed that the standard board will be compatible with 060's when available.

Like the 40MHz version, the 33MHz system comes complete. However, the 28MHz uses your original CPU and clocks it up slightly. It's the DMA that makes the real difference – and should provide a very noticeable improvement in the speed of applications and even rendering.

# pdrive!

*Paul Austin goes boldly beyond the 25MHz barrier with the aid of the Warp Engine*



*A fairly complex scene rendered in a fraction of the time, thanks to the power of the Warp Engine*

a mips test – million of instructions per second. After firing-up SysInfo and clicking on the speed test, a whopping 30.5 mips popped-up as opposed to the usual 17.5, yet I still had the installation disk in my sticky mitt?

After listing the install disk, it soon became clear that the board doesn't actually require any configuration whatsoever – the only none essential option being a ROM Remapping utility, which if used employs 512k to remap the system ROM, thereby speeding up intuition a little.

Leaving this aside, the disk's sole purpose in life is to format and partition any hard drives you may wish to use with the built-in SCSI II controller.

The ability of the board to work first time without the assistance of any additional software is just one of the many testaments to the inherent quality of the product. Over recent years I've had the pleasure and sometimes pain of using and reviewing quite a number of accelerators, the vast majority of which all demand at least some sort of software intervention to operate properly – but not this time, plug it in and you're off.

## REFLECTION

Although I've made a point of the physical problems associated with installation, it must be stressed that this is a reflection on the cramped and curious design of the A4000 rather than the Warp Engine.

As far as the Warp was concerned, you only need do two things; plug it in the slot, and turn on the machine – installation complete, the tricky bit was the former...

## Verdict

If you've got the cash get the card. Although there are a number of acceleration systems for the A4000 and A3000 this is far and away the best yet.

The only real challenger is GVP's G-Force 040 which costs roughly the same price but has the disadvantage that it requires GVP's own sims. In addition the planned SCSI II add-on still isn't shipping.

If the boasts of up-chip-ability are true it's unlikely you'll ever need to upgrade. All in all, an excellent product that's both reliable on all applications and better still, expandable. Very highly recommended.

## Warp speed

Obviously rendering is the primary target for Warp Engine but general application speed also rockets. During testing we ran the following as a taster:

### LightWave test

Using the standard textures example rendered at video resolution 752 x 576 with low anti-aliasing.

| | |
|---|---|
| Normal A4000 25MHz | 16.17 mins |
| Warp Engine 40MHz | 6.43 mins |

### ADPro test

Using internal IDE drive, a video resolution Jpeg image was loaded, scaled down by 75%, converted to a negative and rendered as a Ham8 image using small ordered dithering. Process automated via ProControl.

| | |
|---|---|
| Normal A4000 25MHz | 23.92 sec |
| Warp Engine 40MHz | 14.07 sec |

It's worth stressing that all applications which regularly access files on disk – Imagine2/3 being prime examples – would show even bigger improvements when employing the Warp's SCSI II controller.

## Memory warning

One of the big advantages of the Warp Engine is the ability to use your existing RAM. This is fine for both the 28MHz and 33MHz configurations but in the case of the 40MHz board you could run into problems.

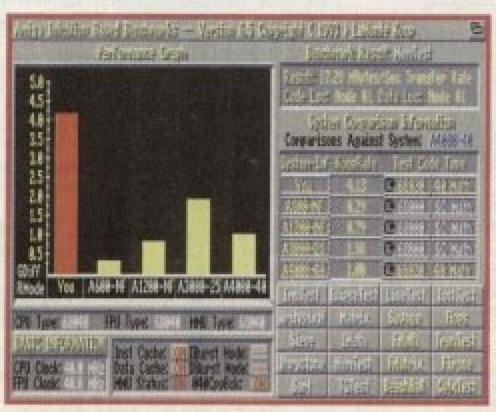
Although the latter will work perfectly with both 80ns and 70ns 72 pin sims, it's only at its best with 60ns RAM. Unfortunately it's almost certain the RAM shipped with your machine was either 80ns or 70ns.

As a result, investors in the 40MHz board may need to shell-out for faster RAM if they want the board at its very best. However, it's not essential, and in fact we tested the board with 70ns RAM by adding wait states, and as you can see the results were still pretty impressive.

Thanks to some inspired design work it's even possible to mix and match sims of varying sizes, ranging between 4Mb, 8Mb, 16Mb and 32Mb, giving a theoretical maximum of 128Mb within the four sim slots provided.

There are occasional restrictions to ensure the RAM is contiguous – fortunately all is explained in the brief but impressive manual.





*Beachball, Flops and Mentest individually point towards the power of the Warp Engine, it's only when they're put together within an application that you see the real effect*

## SYSTEM ESSENTIALS

**RED** = Essential **BLACK** = Recommended

A4000/A3000 — 60ns RAM for 40MHz version

## The bottom line

*Product: Warp Engine*
*Supplier: Premier Vision*
*Price: 28MHz without 040 = £ 599*
*28MHz with 040 = £799*
*33MHz with 040 = N/A*
*40 MHz with 040 = £1199*
Tel: 071-721 7050

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 10 |
| **Implementation** | 10 |
| **Value for money** | 8 |
| **Overal** | 9 |

# The lighter side of life

amiga update

**As the Lightwave invasion gathers pace, Amiga Computing looks at video tuition and some amazing seamless textures**

Although undoubtedly one of the friendliest modelling and animation systems on the market, the pure number and variety of features inevitably make Lightwave, and it's accompanying modeller, a tough nut to crack for even experienced 3D enthusiasts.

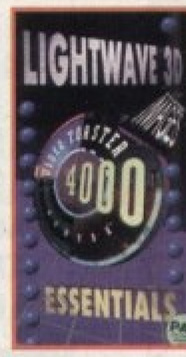
What's really needed is a little hands-on advice from a real expert. Thankfully, that's exactly what's on offer courtesy of Desktop Images.

Although formally only available to our ex-colonial cousins in the States, Lee Stranahan's series of Lightwave and modeller tutorials are now out in PAL.

As anyone who's waded through a fairly technical manual will know, ten minutes with an expert often equates to exactly the same thing – minus a couple of days of head scratching and frustration. Thanks to Mr Stranahan, this old adage is now proven beyond all doubt.

As luck would have it, our omnipresent presenter is not only blessed with a wealth of knowledge and a natural air of confidence, but also a dry wit which goes a long way towards negating the trip to the dentists feeling all too often associated with tutorial videos.

During Lightwave Essentials, our hero starts off gently with a guided tour of Layout. As existing users will already know, Layout is by far the simplest element in the Lightwave repertoire.




With this in mind I sat back, fully expecting to learn very little, confident in the knowledge acquired during six months of hard slog with manual and software.

At which point Mr Stranahan put me firmly in my place. Obviously most people will be pretty au fait with the basics, but when it comes to time saving, tricks of the trade and basic working methods, a few choice comments soon translate into hours saved in design and rendering times.

As the name suggests this, the first in the series, is fairly basic stuff and doesn't touch on some key stumbling blocks such as surfaces and the application of texture maps.

However, what is provided during the two hour introduction to the six -part collection does lay the ground rules and may well provide enough information on its own to cater for those who aren't likely to take their Lightwave creations any further than the ubiquitous flying logo.

A gentle, but never the less essential introduction to the art of Lightwave animation. Picture quality could be a little better though – no doubt due to the NTSC to PAL conversion.

Nevertheless, I'd recommend every Lightwave user to watch it. The time saving tips alone will soon cover the initial outlay – highly recommended.

*Supplier: Desktop Images*
*Tel: 0101 818 841 8980*
*Price: $49.95*

## DMM Update

For those who caught our September issue and subsequently rushed out to invest in a copy of Dynamic Motion Module, only to discover it didn't work with the new standalone Lightwave – don't despair.

Like many third-party developers, Positron were caught unawares by the arrival of Lightwave 3.5. However, the incompatibility problems have now been eradicated and updates should already be shipping.

Contact Positron Publishing on: 0101 402 493 6280

## Pro-Textures

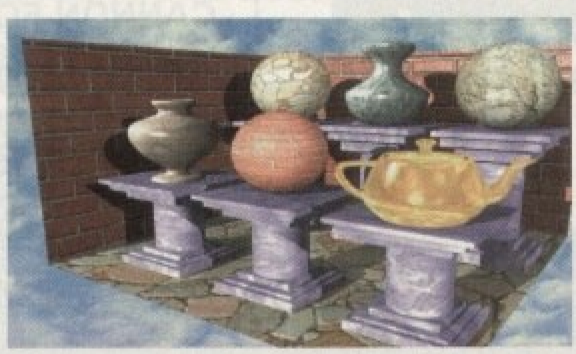
With the sudden profusion of CD-Rom and assorted texture collections, there hardly seems any room left for yet another collection of textures.

However, in a seemingly flooded market the Pro-Textures combo collection does have one huge advantage over the opposition. Unlike almost every other product on the market, Pro-Textures offers the ability to tile seamlessly.

Not the kind of news to send most people gaily romping through the fields naked in a state of uncontrolled euphoria, unless of course you're a 3D fan of course.

The big problem with most textures is that when rapped around any 3D model, a very noticeable seam runs down the object. Not the case with this collection.

After what must have been a torturous process, each edge matches precisely with it's opposite number. As a result, waves glide off into infinity, bricks wrap effortlessly around walls and so on. In total, you receive 24 textures over eight disks, each provided as a Ham, GIF and 24-bit Jpeg. Being an American import, the resolution is 736 x 480 which obviously will require some image processing for use as full screen backdrops. However, this isn't really what the collection is intended for.



**Say goodbye to seams courtesy of Pro-Textures – essential software for serious 3D fans**

Purely thanks to the seamless texture mapping, I'd say the Pro-Textures series is a must for any self respecting 3D enthusiast. And of course, although ideal for Lightwave, the collection is equally at home with Imagine, Real 3D or whatever package you prefer.

*Supplier: Visual Inspirations*
*Tel: 0101 813 935 6410*
*Prices: $99.95*

# WE MUST BE MAD !!!

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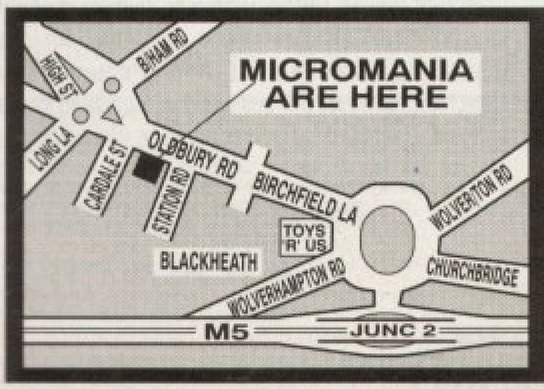
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# Operation Kickstart

*Another operating system, another upgrade, but can this one outdo its predecessors? Kevin Kitching finds out*

It has never been one of Commodore's strong points. Advertising, that is. This latest operating system upgrade is no exception to that rule. OK, perhaps that is a bit harsh bearing in mind their current problems, but their veil of secrecy does them no good at all.

Yes, Kickstart and Workbench 3.1 have been released with the usual lack of fanfares or ceremony. Even more surprising, is the fact that Commodore haven't released it directly!

Instead they opted to contract out to a third-party organisation, VillageTronic – of Picasso II fame – to blow the ROMs and print the manuals.

The launch was very high profile (not) with a small mention in a couple of magazines. The volume of the sound was little more than a whisper.

This upgrade has to be the most expensive yet! Release 2.0 started life at around £80 to the average man in the street and this little baby will set you back a cool £100.

Even worse, there are two versions of the upgrade kit, depending on which Amiga you own. For the A500/1500/2000 owners, the Kickstart version is 40.63 on one chip, while the A3000 and A4000 owners get version 40.68 on two chips, yet both are release 3.1!

Confused? You will be! Alright, you have parted with your hard earned wonga and have furiously opened the parcel which has arrived at your door. (It is too large to fit through the average letter box). What do you get for your hard-earned cash?

The first thing you get is the rather roughly bound Workbench 3.1 and AmigaDOS 3.1 manuals. These are obviously not the usual offerings from Commodore.

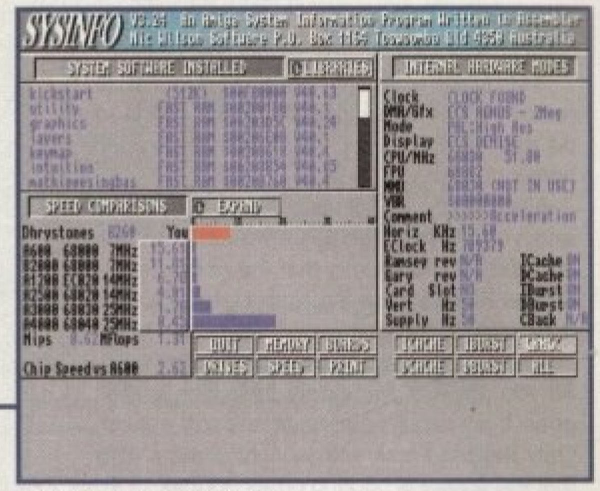
No colours here. Instead they have a plain white cover with a rather stark Commodore logo in black and the manual's title on the cover, held together with a cheap plastic binder.

They look rather shoddy to say the least, but then who reads manuals? Let's be honest, these wouldn't even look good on a shelf! OK, they go back into the box, never to be seen again. Like I said, no one ever reads manuals unless something goes wrong.

The Workbench disks are the only items which look like they have come from Commodore, and are the same standard issue for both upgrade versions.



***Add a Picasso to a non AGA machine and you can even enjoy a 25b colour Workbench***



***All the information on the new OS courtesy of Sysinfo***

The Workbench 3.1 manual is basically the same as its predecessor, both having been written by the same team on a variety of Amigas.

There is additional information in chapter one regarding the selection of monitors, languages and keyboards, and chapter two expands on using pointers. This seems strange, as this is an upgrade and many users will already know these operations.

The pictorial screen representations (i.e. screenshots) within the manual are not as clear as in the original manuals, but this is compensated for in the additional information and clear explanation of Workbench and its functions.

## MANUAL

The initial "cheap and nasty" feel of the manual soon subsides as you realise that the book will stay flat on the desktop or can be folded over because of the binder.

This is certainly a well written manual, and more surprisingly it was written by Commodore. VillageTronic make no apologies for stating that it was self-printed by them, although you do get the impression that they perhaps used Pagestream to do it. There is practically no need to buy a third-party Workbench book, this has it all.

A very welcome addition is an appendix devoted entirely to AmigaGuide, which for some people has caused frustration under Workbench 3.0 by being called MultiView.

AmigaDOS 3.1 is a joy to read! This is a mega-upgrade to the original. Not quite the incentive to roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty, but at least all the information is there in front of you if and when you take the plunge.

The book even begins by explaining how to use the manual, and takes three pages to fully explain this. Easy or what?

There are more directions and cross references to sections than an insurance document – the difference is you can read and understand this. A complete novice can be up and running in no time, it really is that simple and well laid out.

Now, down to the bones of the upgrade. The main ingredient of the package is the chip or chips, depending upon which Amiga you have.

This has a small white stick-on label with the words 'Kickstart 3.1' typed on it. Again, rather cheap looking, but once inserted into the Amiga's ROM socket, no one will ever notice.

Fitting is very simple for anyone with normal eyesight and a reasonable level of manual dexterity. All you have to do, observing the usual anti-static precautions, is identify and remove the old ROM and insert the new one. This is done, preferably, with the Amiga turned off!

If you have never removed a chip, this is the most traumatic part of the operation. If you have changed a chip, all you have to do

## A little colour

**Those of you who expect an improvement in the number of colours available for Workbench are in for a big disappointment. This upgrade does not turn your Amiga into an AGA compatible.**

**That is unless, of course, you have a 24-bit graphics card in your Amiga. With a display card, such as the Picasso II, you can select a 256 colour Workbench with no problems at all – who needs the AGA chipset?**

**The palette editor in Prefs really does show the colour wheel which was previously only accessible with an AGA Amiga. ECS owners will not be able to see this, instead a bar is shown with the words 'colour wheel'. You must click on this bar to bring up another screen. Clumsy, but effective.**

**While in the Prefs drawer, IPrefs on non-AGA Amigas will not allow ModePromotion. This feature effectively de-interlaces the display to prevent flicker, but requires the AGA chipset.**

is try to stay awake.

Remember, you will probably have to remove most of the innards of the Amiga to do this, especially on the A2000! Anyway, here's one we did earlier...

Alright, the chip is snugly in its new home and you can power up the machine. The immediate difference is that the normal start-up that Kickstart 2 gives, in the form of a light grey screen, has gone.

The machine now looks to have crashed. All you get is a quick grey flash, the screen goes black, and your heart misses a beat. Only the hard disk activity light gives a clue that the Amiga is booting up as normal.

When the Workbench screen appears, it now has a white title bar, identical to the A4000. The speed at which Workbench loads is a little faster than with Kickstart 2, which indicates that there are some welcome changes in the ROM to boost performance.

The next exercise is to install the six Workbench 3.1 disks to the boot partition of your hard disk. This is simplicity in itself, being totally idiot proof, which is just as well as there are no instructions.

Just insert the Install 3.1 disk into the disk drive, double-click the Install icon, select your language and away it goes.

## OVERWRITE

Commodore have used their standard installer software to overwrite your old version 2.x files, and the whole installation is a doddle. The software is all version 40.xx and takes up less disk space than Workbench3.0 did. After the disk swaps have been completed, all that remains is to reboot the Amiga and sit back.

Many disk operations are faster, and so are the screen updates. The maths libraries have been reworked to provide extra speed with some applications, although there are PD versions around which are both smaller and much faster.

Generally speaking, the new software is the GTi of Workbench releases. And yet, strangely it seems, there are some die-hards out there who insist on staying with Kickstart and Workbench 1.3. Come on people, wise up, no one is writing for the old system these days. Move with the times.

Workbench 2.x users will find that they now have the ability to display graphics and text on workbench, thanks to the Datatypes of Workbench 3.

Even non Amiga filetypes such as the PC's PCX and BMP graphics formats can be displayed in a window. There is support for some CD operations too such as CDXL (CD animation files).

Yes, the software carries CD-ROM support. This is not as good as the PD AmiCDROM system, but at least it works this time!

The format command now gives additional options too. Directory cacheing allows faster window updates with the FastFileSystem.

So far everything sounds too good to be true. I must confess that I have some reservations about the reasoning behind this release.

Kickstart 3.1 was announced as being in the A4000T by Commodore. The version number of that chip was 40.70. Now it is common knowledge that the A4000T has never seen the light of day in the UK, so therefore no one knows if the chip does support Auto-Booting from a SCSI CD-ROM (as promised by Commodore).

A little detective work reveals that VillageTronic were going to use version 40.70 ROMs, but here is the crunch – there were timing problems with the SCSI bus and it simply would not work with the 040 accelerators out there.

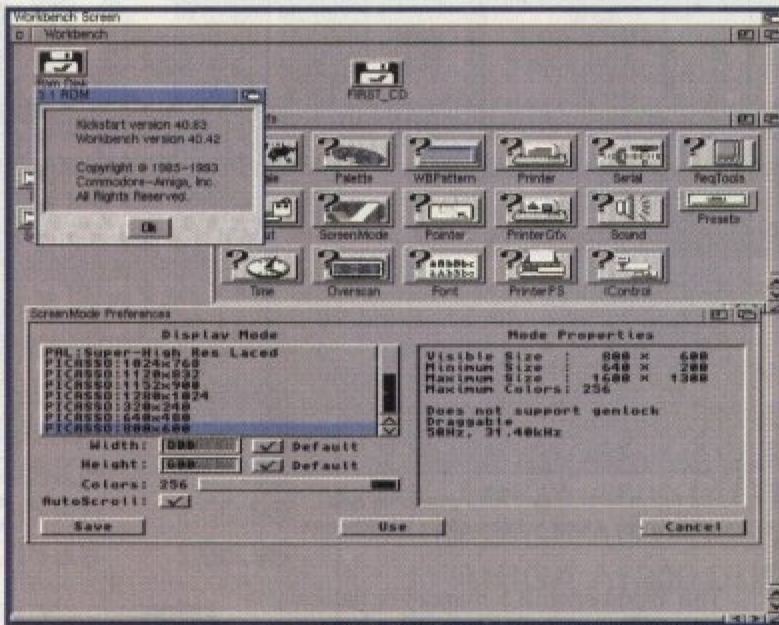
So, a compromise was reached – use a version that does work. Simple, just go back to an earlier working version tested by developers.

Consequently there is no direct support for CD-ROM and no real difference in performance on the A4000 (other than a speed increase on accelerated ECS Amigas).

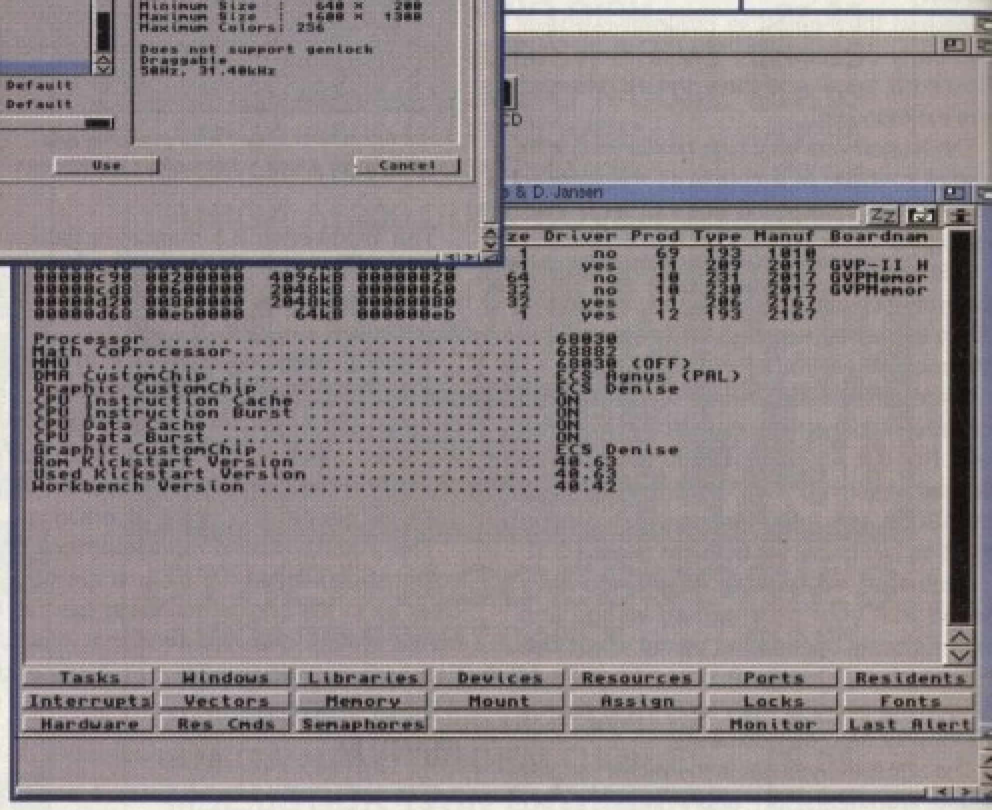
So what is the point of the costly upgrade? Well, for the ECS Amigas (A500+ etc.) there are no real additional benefits. Okay, the title bar and pull-down menus on Workbench are now black on white. This looks more pleasing than the previous attempt. But these are just the "bells and whistles."

Workbench 3.1 is definitely for hard disk systems only. Six disks are a lot to swap on a floppy-based system. Some software written with Kickstart 3 in mind will work, but if the AGA chips are required, you've had it. Game over player one.

The situation is even worse for A4000 owners. The changes are so subtle that this definitely is a non starter. The software does not drastically outperform the previous Workbench 3.0. Not for 100 folding tokens anyway.




All the old screen modes plus much more thanks to the added power Picasso




A complete breakdown of system information at your fingertips

## Cheaper prospects

In time, the price may fall, as it did with Workbench 2, but at the moment, the quality of the product set against the usability does not equal that much dosh.

An interesting note is that the upgrade will not be available for A600 or A1200 owners, and there are no plans to offer any upgrade in the future.

This is definitely an upgrade for those with "big box" Amigas who *must* have the latest operating system. After a while the newness wears off and you realise that it's just another operating system.

Programmers (official Commodore developers) already have Kickstart v40.68 which they can soft-kick into memory. The point is, at the end of the day, if end users will not shell out £25 for Kickstart 2.04, who will part with £100 for Kickstart 3.1?

## The bottom line

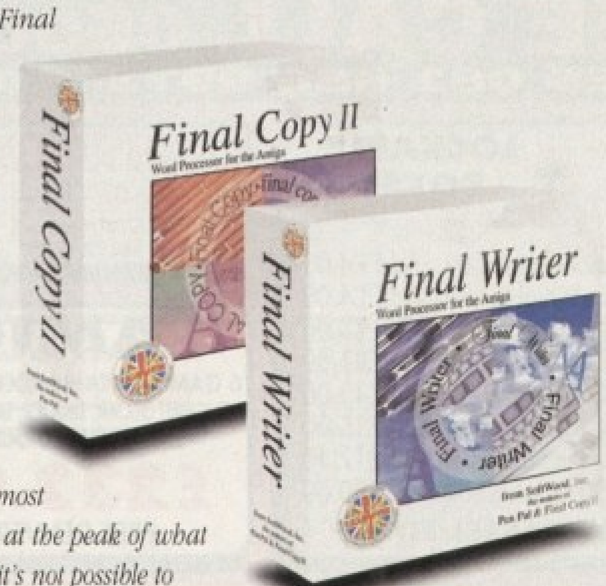
*Product: Kickstart 3.1*
*Supplier: Blittersoft*
*Price: £100*
*Phone: 0908 220196*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | **7** |
| **Implementation** | **7** |
| **Value for money** | **6** |
| **Overall** | **7** |

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*Final Copy II (upgradable to Final Writer as your needs grow) and Final Writer are the only word processors that give you* ***PerfectPrint****™ - a unique printing advantage giving silky smooth Industry Standard Adobe™ Type 1 or Nimbus Q scalable outline fonts direct to* ***any*** *printer (even dot matrix and ink jet), in both landscape and portrait. Others use a restrictive and unnecessary jumble of different fonts with complex driver programs for outputting to various printers. The launch of Final Copy II introduced* ***FastDraw****™ - a special set of structured drawing tools for constructing lines, borders, arrows, circles etc. directly on the page.*




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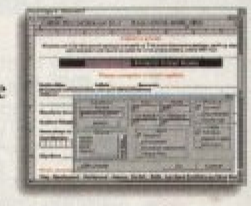
*Now, as others are just starting to add similar features, saying they're 'revolutionary', Final Writer extends the innovation further with* ***FastDraw Plus****™ - adding even faster and more functional options, including a new rotate command. Final Writer Release 2 is again leading the way with the introduction of* ***TouchTools****™ and* ***PowerUser Bar****™ technologies. These features give the user a definable area at the top of each document window where up to eight "one-touch" button strips can be configured. Each strip contains easily customisable sets of functions giving instant access to all the major commands/features - with a simple click of the mouse! There is even a set of buttons allowing "one-touch" selections of font style and size plus variations including Plain,* ***B****old, Italic and Underline!*
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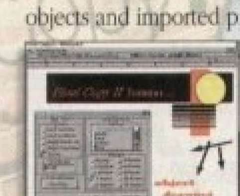

### Final Copy II Release 2

Our word processors go beyond simply producing normal letters and documents, at which they naturally excel, and progress into a world where "how the whole document looks" is just as important as "what it says". Admittedly, this can be achieved with Desk Top Publishers - but they're not so easily used as word processors, especially when a good looking letter needs creating quickly - they're far too cumbersome. *Final Copy II* offers the perfect balance between the two requirements... Ease and speed of use, with total control over the perfect printed presentation.



**Complete control over how documents look, now *you* have it at your finger tips on your Amiga!** Features include: **FastDraw**™ (on-screen drawing tools for use with the generation of borders, boxes and lines or arrows at any angle), Multiple Newspaper Style snaking columns, **PerfectPrint**™ (the unique ability to use **Post Script**™ outline fonts on absolutely any printer in either portrait or landscape) and Text Auto Flows around graphic objects and imported pictures (placed anywhere, scaled or cropped) with the highest print quality. Text can also be printed over graphics!




It's features like these that explain why there are some professional magazines, with 200+ pages, that are produced entirely with *Final Copy II*! Publishers, and many others, have quickly discovered that...

**No other Amiga Word Processor in the same category, and at such a competitive price, has all the capabilities *Final Copy II* users have always taken for granted! Isn't it time for you to take a look too!**

*SoftWood Direct Price:* ***£49.95***

### "What the Papers Say..."

**Amiga Shopper...** *"Final Writer is the closest thing to Microsoft Word to appear on the Amiga"* **Amiga Computing...** *Final Copy II voted "Best DTP Package"* **Amiga Shopper...** *"If ever there was a good reason to buy a hard drive for your Amiga, Final Writer* **is** *that reason - Amiga Word Processing has come of age with Final Writer"* **Amiga Format...** *Final Copy II is "The Best Word Publisher"* **Amiga Pro...** *"In comparison (to Wordworth 3), Final Writer 2 is slick, solid and reliable and... is a damn site more usable"* **Amiga User International...** *Final Writer is "a powerful program that produces excellent results"* **Amiga Computing...** *Final Writer is "easily the most configurable Amiga WP ever"* **CU Amiga...** *Final Writer is the "most powerful WP ever to grace the Amiga"* **Amiga Format...** *"I'd go for Final Writer over Wordworth (3) - Final Writer is a joy to use"*

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# ur Laurels...




## NEW Final Writer Release 2

*Final Writer* was launched last year with the power user in mind. It is the Amiga's only Hard Drive compulsory word processor - neither performance nor features have been compromised to maintain compatibility with floppy drive only systems. As well as having a unique list of features for the author of longer documents and publications - automatic indexing, table of illustrations, table of contents and bibliography generation - *Final Writer* with its **TextBlocks™** was the first word processor to put a character (or group of characters) anywhere on the page, at any size and any angle. It offers a virtually unlimited ability for effects with graphics *and* text. Just like *Final Copy II*, *Final Writer* also includes **PerfectPrint™** and has a set of tools to create structured graphics with new **FastDraw Plus™** (now with additional functionality that includes new options like rotation). And... you can also access features unique to SoftWood with both the new **Touch Tools™** & **PowerUser Bar™** "one-touch" technologies. Simply 'clicking' a button, means you can define, change and save such things as the 'Paragraph Styles' (ie. Font, Font Size, Text Position, Bold, Italic, Underline etc.) and 'Layout Options' (left, right, centre or justified, bullets, line spacing, indents etc.). The options you have through single button selections are nothing less than remarkable! Indeed, one magazine heralded these as "the closest thing to Microsoft Word to appear on the Amiga"! Also uniquely, *Final Writer* can import, scale, crop, view on screen and output structured PostScript EPS clip-art images (we supply a hundred free with the package) to *any* printer (>2mb system RAM required). And... if you own a PostScript printer *Final Writer* is the only word processor with a set of output options including scaling, crop marks, thumbnails, and half-toning. Combine features like ARexx/Macros and Text Clips™, with others new to *Final Writer*, including floating palettes and UNDO/ REDO (on text, formatting *and* graphics actions) - and you have... ***Final Writer Release 2.***






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# It's the business

star letter

I have recently purchased an A1200 Amiga computer and have to confess to being completely lost as to where to go next. I have an 80 megabyte hard-drive and got some free games with the package.

I hope to be able to use my Amiga for a range of practical purposes. Firstly, I want to do some business projects – could you suggest a good database package? Also is there a personal finance package that would be suitable for my machine?

Secondly, is there a good but cheap package I can get to develop smart presentations for my business projects?

I already have a word-processor that came with the computer but it does not compare too well with the ones I have used in my old job. Please could you tell me which is the best word-processor on the Amiga.

*Steven Ross, Berkshire*

**OK, we'll go through the standalone options first. As far as a database is concerned it might well be worth scanning the PD section to see if you can pick something up for a couple of pounds.**

**If PD or Shareware doesn't really interest you could go commercial with either Superbase Personal4 or its big brother Superbase Pro4.**

**An alternative would be Prodata, perhaps in concert with its word processing partner Protext. As luck would have it, Protext also happens to be an excellent word processor. However, it must be stressed that although Protext is ideal for business it isn't the first choice when it comes to pretty presentation. The question is would you prefer glamorous printouts or a symbiotic database and word processing system.**

**As for a personal finance manager, I'd definitely recommend Maxiplan4. Although it's not the prettiest software in the world it's in my opinion by far the best.**

**As for presentation, especially in a business environment, I'd seriously consider Scala HVT. Although the acronym stands for home video titler it's still ideal for simple presentation work. It's also easy to use, and better still relatively cheap.**

**If you're still in the market for an opinion on the best word processor I'm a devoted Wordworth3, although Final Writer has just as many devoted followers.**

**Both offer a mixture of excellent word processing features mixed with a good helping of DTP add-ons which makes for very impressive hard copy.**

**The final alternative is to invest in a combination of all of the above – with the exception of Scala HVT. And as luck would have it, good old Europress Software have the very thing in the form of Home Office.**

**Although the individual components don't match-up to the individuals head-to-head, the overall package does offer a nicely integrated system at a bargain price.**




# In communication

I am trying to start a Blitz User Group which will enable Blitz Users to communicate via a free disk magazine. The system works like this:

Users send one blank floppy plus a self addressed and stamped envelope. I then collate all the elements of the magazine and send it return post to members. As I said it's all completely free except for the price of the stamp.

If you're interested send your questions, answers, ideas and programs to the following address: Daryl Booth, 22B St John Avenue, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6HE.

**Well it's great to see that users are continuing to support machines even though the remains of Commodore appear indifferent to plight of their product and its users.**

**If there's anyone else who would like a shout for a similar non-profit making service, whether it be a newsletter or user group, feel free to drop us a line and we'll get you in print.**

# Blunder blitz

On opening a recent issue of *Amiga Computing* I discovered with great surprise and joy a brand new Blitz 2 column. I followed the instruction and realised there was an error in the listings. The listing should read as follows:

```
WBStartup
CloseEd
NoCLI
ev.1=0
WBenchtofront_
Wbtoscreen 0
Use Screen 0
Window 0, 120, 70, 200, 40, $10000|$8, "My
Window",1,2
Repeat
ev=0
ev=WaitEvent
Until ev=$200
CloseWindow 0
End.
```

Notice the changes in lines 5 and 6. Line 5 was WorkbenchenchToFront_, and line 6 was WorkbenchToScreen.

Please don't take this as a criticism as I was otherwise very impressed with your excellent approach to the subject, but this could cause some confusion. I am looking forward to the coming instalments of the tutorial.

*Robert Polding, Colyton*

**Well what can we say, apart from thanks for the help. If anyone spots errors in any of our columns please feel free to get in touch and we'll put things right as soon as possible.**

**For those who prefer the e-mail approach here's how to contact Amiga Computing on-line:**

- CompuServe: 70007,4734
- CIX: amigacomputing
- Internet: amigacomputing@cix.compulink.co.uk

# Died a grim death?

Can you tell me when the CD drive for the A4000 will be released and approximately how much it will be?

Also, could you tell me whatever happened to the DSP sound chip with the rumoured 32 channels, built in sampler, etc.? This seems to have been ignored since the CD32 was released.

*Gideon Cresswell, Maidstone*

**If you're waiting for an official Commodore A4000 CD-ROM, I wouldn't hold your breath. As it stands, Commodore will be hard pressed to get their existing hardware back on-line for Christmas.**

**As a result, its highly unlikely they'll embark on an official release this year. Although you've not mentioned it, I assume you particularly want a Commodore drive primarily for the Planar chip and FMV available on the CD32.**

**If that's the case, I'm afraid you'll have to wait and see what happens to Commodore. If, however, you simply want an A4000 compatible CD-ROM it's worth getting in contact with the First Computer Centre. They're already selling a standard IDE CD-ROM with the appropriate installation software and connections. Obviously this won't offer Planar or FMV but it will read any ISO 9660 CD – the industry standard on all formats.**

**As for the DSP chip, this, like many Amiga rumours, has been consigned to the vapourware cupboard. I'm afraid it will be next year at the earliest before you'll see a built-in DSP on any machine in the Amiga range – if at all.**

# What the future holds

Just a note to let you know how much I enjoy a magazine like yours, dedicated as it is to the true computer enthusiast.

I have followed your various features with great interest and have gained insight not only into the world of the Amiga but also into the future of computing in general.

It's so exciting to wonder what surprises technology holds for us around the corner. Is Lightwave Pal as good as people have been saying. I certainly hope so! Then there's the Internet – as it touches more and more people, who can doubt that it will entirely revolutionise the way we live.

And let us not be so foolish as to forget the possibilities offered by virtual reality. How long before we'll be able to work, rest and play all without even having to leave our living rooms. How long before we can all have our own Cyber-girlfriends?

*Andrew Filler, Doncaster*

**It's good to know our efforts are making you so deliriously happy – or are you delirious by nature?**

**As for Lightwave, it is indeed a very special product. However, it must be stressed you need a fairly special machine to use it – 8Mb being the minimum Ram configuration.**

**As for the Internet, it's true there's huge potential, but as it stands I doubt the miracle of modern e-mail will be reaching out into every home for quite some time.**

**At present the net is still a very harsh environment for the novice and unless it's made a little more friendly, it's likely to remain the preserve of the technological elite.**

**With regards to your fantasies of nubile cyber women, I'd suggest a trip to a cyber-psychiatrist as your first port of call. However, if we can put your strange taste in women aside, it's still good to see such enthusiasm for the brave new world – lets hope it lives up to your expectations.**

*Got something to say through the pages of AC? Ezra Surf is our mailman, dedicated to reading your letters and selecting the most interesting for publication. Drop him a line at:*

*Ezra Surf's Postbag , Amiga Computing Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP*

*Please don't enclose saes as Ezra just hasn't got enough paper to reply personally. He might also have to shorten your letters, so don't be offended if you end up getting the chop.*

# 24Bit praise

In this day and age it is refreshing to find that somebody still exists that offers superb service with expert knowledge and a caring attitude. I refer to the 24Bit Club in Scotland.

These guys are the best. They have helped me immeasurably with OpalVision, Imagine and some very serious problems with LightRave (and now LightWave). Please let your readers know about these guys.

If you are serious about 24Bit processing, get serious with the 24Bit Club. A very satisfied 24Bit Club member who is wondering why you have never reviewed the club in your magazine.

*Steve Calkin, Canvey Island*

Alias the Scottish 24Bit Club – *Ed*

**Well, I'm very happy for you. As for a review of the club it's really a case of what they offer that warrants the coverage.**

**As I've already mentioned, any club that feels they offer something special will certainly get a shout in the magazine. Just write in, it's that simple.**

# Image transplant

If I may introduce myself. I am Eneko, a spanish student. I have recently finished my studies of fine arts last year. Since then I've been working on a study of both computer and traditional animation – believing the future lies in the former of the two. I'd appreciate some much needed advice.

As I regular reader of your magazine I know you have extensive knowledge of 3D imagery, more traditional graphics programs and of course the all-important hardware.

My first idea was to develop an easy way to produce images via the computer. Of course, most artists are frightened of the technology and need to see immediate results to maintain any prolonged interest.

As I know a little more than most, this soon evolved into the idea of making a film/video of animation, mixing both computer and traditional animation. My aim is to produce the whole thing over the next year using drawings, my Amiga 3000 and the Opal Vision system.

What I need to know is how to transplant the computer images to film. Any information on video or movie production which uses computer technology – particularly the Amiga since it is a computer easily affordable for the artist – would be welcome.

What kind of technology will come in the future? I mean, could I make and render my scenes in virtual reality in the near future? I don't need concrete answers, just your personal opinion.

I have many questions to ask, but I don't want to waste your time. So if you can help me, or know someone who can, I would be grateful for any contacts you can offer.

*Eneko Cajigas Mazorriaga, Vizcaya, Spain*

**As far as creating graphics quickly is concerned, there are literally hundreds of alternatives on the Amiga. The real question is what sort of images you need?**

**If it's simply a case of titling or presentation graphics, packages like Scala and MediaPoint are the obvious choices.**

**Although they don't provide a lot of painting tools, they do offer a means of displaying existing artwork as backdrops and clips as part of a larger overall multimedia presentation.**

**For example, both can combine stills and animation with Midi, laser disks, CD-ROMs, Canon ion cameras, sound modules and samples.**

**They also have the added bonus of being interactive with the user/audience – something which many artists find particularly appealing.**

**I realise much of the above may have raised even more questions, but if you simply want quick results, pretty much any paint package will do the job.**

**As for your existing system, it appears you're fairly well equipped. However, if you're planning to expand via the mythical add-ons from OpalVision, I wouldn't hold your breath.**

**The OpalVision farce has been an ongoing saga for over two years and there's still no sign of the Roaster chip and the other videographic goodies. Vapourware at its best.**

**As for your query about transferring Amiga art onto video, there's a number options. In the past the only accurate method was to invest in a BetaCam SP edit recorder.**

**However, recently we've seen the arrival of desktop digital video via the PAR card from digital processing systems.**

**Not only is the quality superior, but it's also a much cheaper alternative – even when fully configured with a realtime frame grabber and the essential IDE hard drive/s.**

**However, before investing in the PAR it's well worth catching next month's review of the VLab motion system. Like the PAR, this new card provides real-time video capture and playback in both Composite and S-VHS.**

**But perhaps the best news is that the system will retail considerably cheaper than the PAR and doesn't necessarily require investment in an extra hard drive.**

**It remains to be seen if VLab Motion can match the usability and reliability of the opposition, but if it manages to come even close it may well prove an attractive option for those wanting a single frame and real-time recording facility at reasonable cost.**

**As for you plans to model in virtual reality, I'd say it's very early days. Although VR is beginning to make its mark as a training and research tool in medicine and industry, the system overheads on the Amiga are simply too high to make it practical.**

**As for the query about additional advice, I suggest you read on and take the advice of an obviously very satisfied member of the 24Bit Club.**

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# acas
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## A Star is born

I am writing to ask you how to set up a Star LC100 colour printer. I have tried the Workbench3.0 manual and followed the steps open Workbench and select devs printers, but there is not a Star LC100 colour printer there.

Therefore, I decided to rename another printer Star LC100 colour and then followed the instructions again, but still no joy. I have checked the printer cable and printer but nothing seems to work. Please could you tell me what I am doing wrong?

*A.Powel, Kilmarnock*

**The files in the Devs:Printers drawer are called printer drivers. They allow you to print using a dedicated printer driver.**

**This means that printed output is maximised for neatness using the driver that has been especially written for your printer.**

**However, Workbench doesn't come complete with a set of Star drivers, so you will need to order one from Star Electronics.**

**They will explain exactly what you have to do and how much it will cost (mine was free as I remember).**

**You can contact Star Electronics on 0494 471111.**

## Write enabled, protected disks

I have had trouble loading KindWords 3 onto the required four disks and as a result I have returned them as faulty and asked for replacements. Eventually, following my letter dated 18th July, I did receive an envelope with just two more disks.

However, try as I might, there is no way I can de-crunch these two disk onto four working disks, because each time I follow the instructions I am told that the disks which will receive the de-crunched information are write protected, when in fact they are most definitely write enabled.

As a result I have not been able to get into and use this word processing package. It would appear that looking at the individual files from Workbench the programme does not recognise the drive DF0, although this is the defined drive in the loading instructions.

The replacement disks have not in any way been tampered with, nor has the write protect been altered while trying to de-crunch the program.

I would welcome your help in this small matter, as this KindWords 3 program is just what I want for my A600 and with your help I look forward to being able to load and use this programme.

*G. Earls, E. Yorkshire*

**Apologies for wasting precious ACAS space with a CoverDisk enquiry but I am still getting a horrendous amount of letters and phone calls regarding this problem which I have explained twice before. This is the last time.**

**In order for our disks to de-archive successfully we are forced to use the A600 version of the Format command as it is the only one that works on all Amigas.**

**There is a problem though. The A600 Format command has a bug so that if the disk that the machine is booted from is write protected, further disks that are inserted will be understood to be write protected, whether they are or not.**

**The solution to this is to make sure the KindWords 3 disks are write protected before you boot your machine. Please, no more!**

## Still no Viking warrior

Many thanks for your response to my problems with Heimdall 2. I tried all of your suggestions and have just received, from Mark Price at Core Design, a new set of disks and the request to remove my RAM expansion.

I have sent him a letter which sets out further problems I encountered. When I

➤

## No more 8-bit

I recently bought the September issue of *Amiga Computing* for the Spectrum Emulator on the CoverDisk. Since then I have managed to load some old Spectrum games into the emulator.

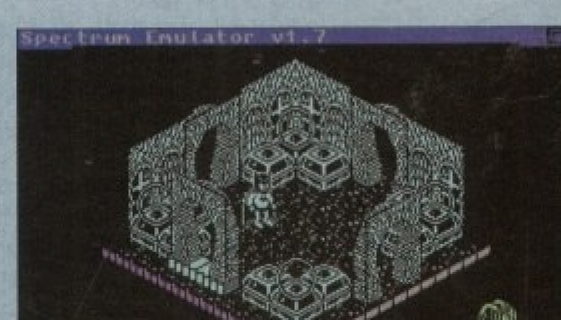
Unfortunately, when I try to save the game as a snapshot I get a window requester stating YOU NEED ASL OR ARP LIBRARY. The same happened when I tried to load the Batman game already on the disk.

What am I doing wrong, or what do I need to do to get them to save and load?

*W. Hepworth, Kent*

**The type of file requesters that the Spectrum emulator uses require the ASL or ARP libraries in order to function. These libraries were written to improve the original, gaudy file requesters. If you own an A600 or above machine and you used the installing program, there should be no problems.**

**If you have an A500, ASL will not work and ARP was not included on the disk. You could look through the Libs drawers on AmigaDOS disks in your collection for a copy of ARP.library, but if this proves fruitless send a letter asking for ARP and I will send you a copy.**




***The ZXSpectrum emulator utilises ARP or ASL for improved file requesters***

removed the RAM expansion and tried again I got the following message:

```
Memory fragmentation - reset and try again
131100
1288928
1280984
0000000
```

These numbers change each time I try to load the game. My Directory Opus shows that with my RAM expansion removed I have 748k.

On checking my RAM disk I find that I have three files within it on startup. They are Clipboards, Env and T.

Please can you help me further? If I can sort out what appears to be a memory problem on startup and the game runs without my memory expansion in place, I would like to disable this without physically removing the board each time I play the game. Many thanks.

*A. Bernascome, W. Sussex*

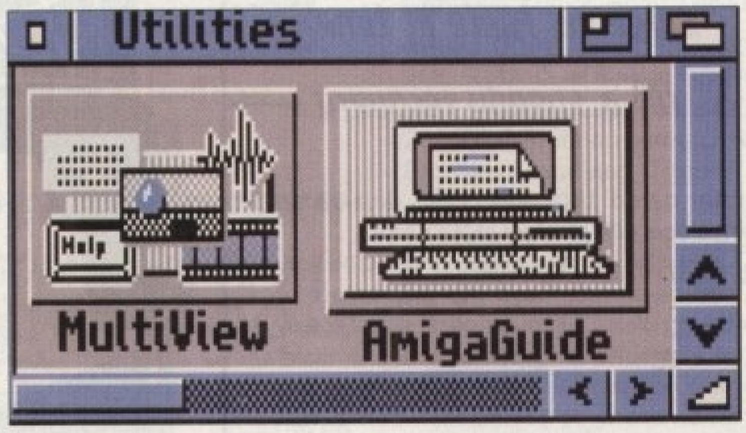
**This is a complicated one. As I have installed Heimdall 2 several times on an A1200 and have had no problems, I would imagine this is a fault of your machine or possibly a virus. It may be a good idea to check your machine with a reputable virus killer such as John Veldthuis' Virus Checker.**

**AGA machines do suffer from memory fragmentation but not to the degree your machine is reporting, and so suddenly. You could be very trusting and send your Heimdall 2 game to me and I will try and install it for you. If you do want to try this please send only the disks.**

**Otherwise I can only see this as a fault with your machine, but it may be worthwhile trying the alternatives suggested before you fork out cash for a check and repair service.**

## AmigaGuide

Apologies for the missing AmigaGuide part 2 article but it will be present in the next issue of *Amiga Computing*. Promise.




***More from the world of AmigaGuide in next month's issue***

**You got problems too? Then drop a line to Amiga Computing Advice Service, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP and we'll move heaven and earth to help in these columns. But sorry, we cannot reply personally, so save those SAEs**

## Car that won't go

Ok! I give up. I've edited the teams in F1GP-Ed, saved them to the disk and finally tried to save the files to executable (disk two of the four F1GP disks), but each time I am not asked for disk two of F1GP and once the machine finds out it tells me that I haven't got the required disk inserted.

Call me thick if you want, but how do you go about writing to executable? I'm 33 years old and balding, so please tell me before I pull out what little hair I have left in frustration? Aaaaah!

*S.Ramsey, Co. Antrim*

**What! Leave that hair alone. We may have the answer yet. First off, it would have been great if you could have sent me some details on your Amiga set-up but as you didn't I'll have to take a rough guess.**

**Boot your Amiga with the CoverDisk containing F1GP-Ed and load the program up. When that has happened take out the CoverDisk and insert your F1GP disk two in the drive. Now click on Read Data From Executable and use the file requester to load up the file called f1gp.**

**When this has loaded, edit the teams etc and then press Write Data To Executable. If any screen requesters appear asking for another disk, just click on Cancel till they go away. Select the f1gp file from the file requester and click on Okay. This should save the new settings to the original file. Don't forget to back up the original f1gp file first.**

**And that's it. If you own a copy of F1GP from the Wild, Weird and Wicked A600 pack you should immediately upgrade to the latest version of F1GP-Ed, details of which were printed in last month's *Amiga Computing* CoverDisk pages. Hope that helps.**




***F1GP-Ed – improve your racing skills and add a new challenge***

## Protext no text

On getting hold of my first hard drive I attempted to install Protext 4.3 from your CoverDisk.

In no circumstances was it going to work so I contacted Arnor who told me that the CoverDisk was for demo purposes only and would not work on the hard drive.

They suggested that I buy the full working copy which I did. On executing HDINSTALL, all the files are successfully copied over to the partition WORK, but that is as far as it goes.

The program will not run by clicking on its icon, even if I boot from hard drive and insert the original floppy in DF0. I can only get the program to run if I boot directly from floppy.

I wrote to Arnor again and they could only suggest that there was something wrong with my startup files and that I should remove them one at a time until I solved the problem.

This I have tried and still the program crashes every time I click on its icon. The configuration setup is correct so that isn't the problem. Any suggestions?

*V. Storey, Norfolk*

**Wow! You have been put through the wringer. The CoverDisk version of Protext will install to hard drive but it was probably a wise decision to upgrade to the fully working version.**

**Why it's not working is another matter and one that seems quite confusing. I would imagine it is probably an error in the HDINSTALL, although if such an error existed Arnor would have probably known about it.**

**You could try copying the program to your hard drive manually by using a directory manager program such as SID 2 or Directory Opus.**

**You could then add an assign into your startup-sequence by doing the following. From the CLI type:**

```
ed s:startup-sequence
```

**Just before the Loadwb command add the following commands:**

```
assign : WORK:
```

**As an example, suppose Protext was in a drawer called Protext in the WORK partition and the Protext disk was called PROTXT1 you would type:**

```
assign PROTXT: WORK:Protext
```

**You could then save the new startup-sequence by pressing Esc, x and then Return.**

**If this doesn't work write in again, but this time explain the crash in more detail and any requesters that may appear.**

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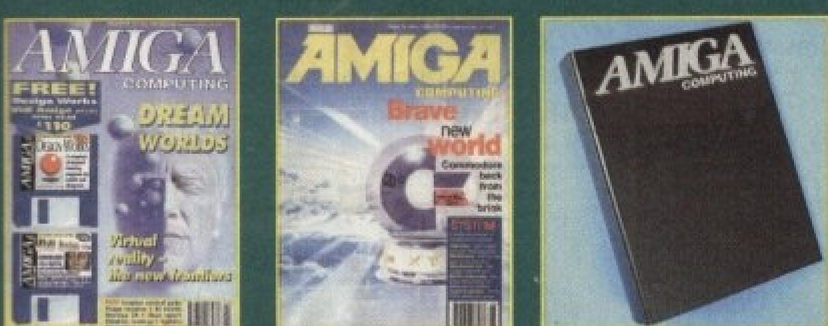
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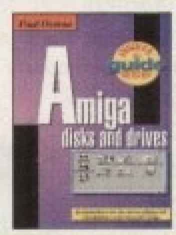
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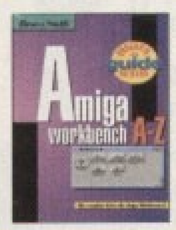
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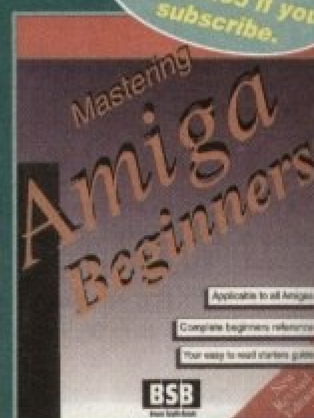

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### • Zool 2

This widely acclaimed game follows Zool's travels through a further six huge levels, larger than those in the original, that feature a number of different ways of completion.

Zool has new and special abilities, including expert climbing skills and is now accompanied by his pet dog, Zoon. With great sound effects, hidden bonus rooms, highly intelligent enemies and the choice to play Zooz, Zool's girlfriend (shown here), Zool 2 makes an excellent free gift.

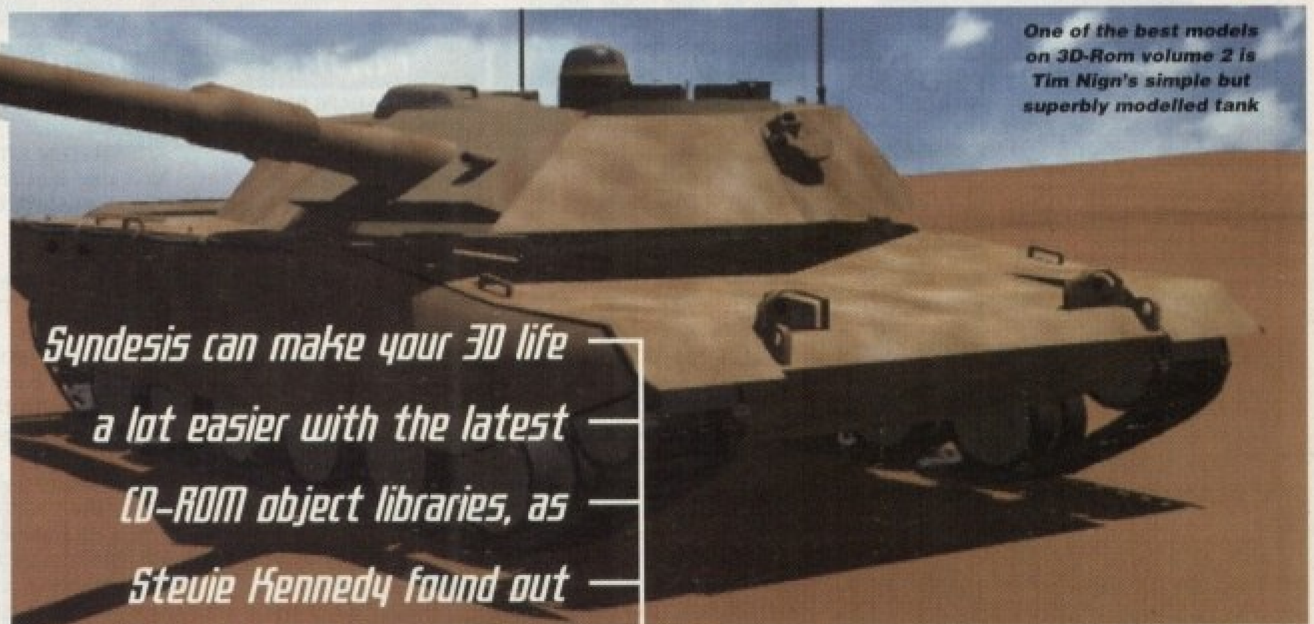
Zool 2 is suitable for any machine, though A1200 owners can choose an enhanced version (see order form).



Save £25.99

# Light infantry

**Syndesis can make your 3D life a lot easier with the latest CD-ROM object libraries, as Stevie Kennedy found out**



*One of the best models on 3D-Rom volume 2 is Tim Nign's simple but superbly modelled tank*

Though billed as a disc designed to demonstrate Syndesis's InterChange 3D object conversion software, the latest collection of models to reach our shores is one of the best yet.

From the company's growing CD range comes 3D-Rom Volume 2 (3DR2), containing hundreds of models, some superb, some merely good, and at its price of approx £65, representing solid value for money.

Creating models when you don't have an expensive 3D digitiser can be a laborious process, particularly if you are less experienced than some, and the models on this disc, mostly donated by commercial modelling companies as samples of their wares, could be a real Godsend.

For those who make a living from the 3D business, the facility to call upon a permanent library of objects at the drop of a hat makes 3DR2 a must buy.

The models, arranged in directories by contributer, are very well organised. Unlike the shovelware approach taken by some CD-ROM companies when putting compilations together, Syndesis have obviously put some thought into the structure of the disc.

There are 202 models in total, many of which are made up of several smaller objects, such as the scenes containing whole rooms or houses, and every effort has been made to make them as easy to use as possible.

Both the major Amiga rendering systems, LightWave and Imagine, are directly supported, as are Wavefront (for Silicon Graphics machines) and the PC's Autodesk 3D Studio.

For quick previews, the manual carries thumbnail piccies of every model, but for a really good look at each creation there is a directory packed with GIF images showing the rendered results. Most of these are 256-colour greyscales, but they show each model in detail to facilitate a bit of window shopping.

LightWave users are spoiled more than most, as each model is presented complete with its own scene. Many of them have image maps as well, though in some cases the companies concerned have limited their usefulness.

The tank shown here, for example, was complete in all respects, save the camouflage images which I was forced to simulate with a few quick fractal noise maps.

The originals, though much more suitable, had been rendered multi-coloured to tease users of the disc into buying the complete scene.

In cases such as Tim Nign's superb tank model, it's not difficult to see why he has held a little bit back. Even where image maps have been limited or scenes set up with groupings in awkward places, the models themselves are of a consistently high quality and take only a little editing or texture mapping to fit straight into any scene you like.





As an educational aid on how to put good models together without over complicating things, the package would sell itself, but as there are so many top-quality creations of such a wide variety (everything from WW1 biplanes to kitchen utensils) you'd be mad not to give this one a whirl.

If you don't already have a CD-ROM drive and you are a 3D afficionado or professional, discs such as this one make the drive itself the next thing on the shopping list.

## Net those models

Syndesis's other new CD-ROM title is the Avalon collection, a "snapshot" of the Avalon site on Internet where, apparently, the 3D dudes hang out in their droves.

Models on the disc range from excellent to pretty awful, and as many have been uploaded by an army of Joe Schmoes like you and me, consistency is not a major feature of the collection.

The Star Trek/Star Wars theme is well represented, but there are enough different types of object to keep most browsers happy. What is disappointing, however, is that there are no load and go LightWave or Imagine models on the disc.

If you don't have a copy of InterChange Plus or Pixel Pro, there's not much here to interest you apart from a directory of textures in raw RGB format.

This is a pity, as some of the models from other program formats are stunning and would grace any scene. There are those, such as the ubiquitous NCC-1701, which we've all seen a million times before, but others are more original, such as the rather gruesome 3D scene set up to exactly match the last few seconds of John F Kennedy's life.

The latter is a new departure for the Americans, who seem at one stroke to have combined a hobby with a national tragedy, and plumbed the depths of bad taste into the bargain. What next? A Vista Pro animation of the Mount St Helens eruption? *(Avalon CD Rom approx £32)*

## SYSTEM ESSENTIALS

**RED** = Essential **BLACK** = Recommended

CD -ROM drive

## The bottom line

*Product: 3D-Rom volume 2*
*Supplier: Syndesis Corp.*
*Price: £65*
*Tel: 0101 414 674 5200*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 8 |
| **Implementation** | 8 |
| **Value for money** | 9 |
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For use with registered version
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Puzzle game with speech!
3185 TUMBLER STREET
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3146 TMA
1st level only game like Airwolf
3141 ROBS HOT GAMES #5
Compilations of Recent PD game submissions, by our Rob!

## ANIMATIONS
3230 2MB AMIGA ANIMATION
The Teapot & the Anglepoise
3229 2MB AMIGA ANIMATION
The high spot funky dancer
3228 2MB AMIGA ANIMATION
Please release me!
3182 MORPHY THE MAGICIAN
Latest 2MB Schwartz anim!
X3181 MORPH MAGICIAN AGA
Requires 4Mb & HD! AGA only

## UTILITIES
3224 BLITZ SHAPE EDITOR 1.1
Edit 3D shapes in Blitz Basic
3220 HD Click V2.7
Hard drive menu system
3219 CALORIE COUNT DIARY
Watch those Calories!
3218 VARK CLI UTIL #5
Collection of new CLI utils
3217 NOSTROMO CHEATS V3
More cheats for cheats!
3203 DMC MAG CREATOR 1.21
Create your own disk mags
3204 EPOCH MASTER V3.0
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3197 (AB) EAGLEPLAYER 1.52
Superb module player!
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# Spitting image

*Looks can be deceiving. Denny Atkin shows you why there is more to ImageFX than meets the eye*

At first glance, you'd not even notice that ImageFX had been upgraded. But diving in and trying ImageFX 2.0 is like taking a swig of rum punch when you're expecting Kool-Aid – it's a lot stronger than it looks.

This new release maintains the ease of use of earlier versions, while adding a suite of new and improved features that promise to push it to the forefront of the Amiga image-processing pack.

Howeve, before we go any further it must be stressed this is a preview of an almost-final beta version of ImageFX, so some features could be dropped at the last minute. More likely, though, you'll find that Nova crammed in a few more at the last minute.

New to version 2 is the ability to run on the Workbench, complete with the preview window – previous versions forced you to work "blind" on the Workbench.

Working on the Workbench saves a bit of Chip RAM, and is handy for creating art such as Workbench backdrops that will normally share the Workbench palette.

Another interface improvement is the addition of previews for most of the special effects. When selecting settings for an effect such as punch, two thumbnail views open next to the control gadget.

One shows the original image, and the second window shows you the image after applying the effect with the current settings. If your effect looks great in the thumbnail view but lousy at full size, ImageFX features single-level undo and redo.

ImageFX 2.0 features a new optional thumbnail file-requester that should be standard on all Amiga graphics programs.

Instead of just bringing up a list of filenames, the requester displays thumbnail icon images of all the graphics in your directory. (These are stored as small, separate files created by ImageFX, for fast loading.)



*ImageFX running on a 256-colour Workbench screen*

ImageFX 2.0 features a high degree of retargetability. You can display the interface window on just about any graphics card that installs itself legally in the Amiga's screen-modes list.

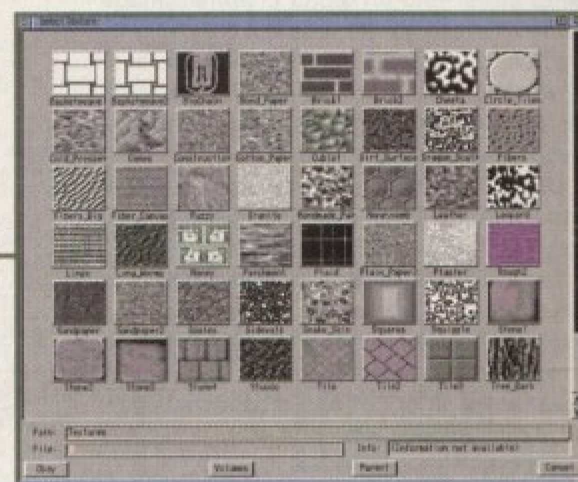
The preview screen (the working screen before you render your final images) can be displayed on Amiga, DCTV, Firecracker 24, Ham-E, IV24, OpalVision, or Retina cards, or on the Workbench on unsupported cards that do feature Workbench emulation.

Final images can be directly rendered to Amiga-mode screens or DCTV, EGS, Firecracker, Grafexa, Ham-E, IV24, OpalVision, Picasso, Retina, or SAGE screens.

A Foreign render module lets you render images for graphics boards you don't have installed on your Amiga – you could use this to create an AGA graphic on an ECS Amiga, for instance. No matter what graphics subsystem you use, ImageFX 2.0 will let you use it to the fullest.

ImageFX 2.0 features a series of IMP (ImageFX Multi Processor) which is a new batch processor module that lets you run a process or effect on a series of images automatically, without having to mess with ARexx scripting.

IMP can work with single images, a series of images, or Op5 ANIM animation files. IMP lets you do processes such as doing a video-colour-limit operation on all the images in a



*Some of the textures available in ImageFX 2.0*

directory, or adding a water-droplet effect over a series of animation frames.

Browser is a stand-alone version of ImageFX's thumbnail file-requester which can be used to select image files, animations, and Mpeg streams for viewing.

And as in earlier versions, a complete version of Nova's Cinemorph image-morphing program is included, and fully integrated with ImageFX.

Nearly every individual feature of ImageFX has been dramatically improved – even the most simple have been fine-tuned to the fullest.

ImageFX sports a wide variety of image-processing effects, accessible from the Toolbox menu. You'll find all the expected ➤



*ImageFX's new icon-based file requester.*

## Animation station

**ImageFX isn't just an image processor, it's also an animation processor. You can load and save frames in IFF ANIM (Op5 and Op7), Grasp/DL, and FLI formats.**

**New in this version is support for encoding and decoding animations in Mpeg format. This heavily compressed format, the same one used by the full-motion video cartridge for CD32, doesn't result in the highest-quality animations, but can be used to reduce multi-megabyte animations to a couple hundred kilobytes.**

**IMP, mentioned earlier, makes it easy to perform image-processing operations on multiple frames of an animation. Add a dazzling lightning bolt to your company logo animation, throw in some lens flares, and fade out by swirling the graphic down a virtual drain. You can alter animations so they exhibit Video Toaster-like effects.**

There's a lot more to ImageFX 2.0 than I had room to cover here. I haven't even touched on Cinemorph, which allows you to create high-quality single-image or animation morphs.

Or on the full ARexx interface, with dozens of pre-written macros, which adds even more image – and batch-processing capabilities. Or on CMYK support, region loading and saving, or auto-cropping.

ImageFX has the best memory-handling of any Amiga image-processing program – not only does it work well even in a system with fragmented memory, but it has built-in virtual-memory support for working with large files, even on systems without memory-management units.

Online AmigaGuide help brings answers (and full ARexx programming documentation) at a press of the Help key. And available documentation for ImageFX's operators and loaders means third parties will continue to extend the program's capabilities – some modules, such as a PhotoCD loader, are already available.

## Miscellany

➤ colour effects, such as colour-to-grey, solarize, negative, etc.; plus a few bonuses such as halftone (nine types, including special brush and alpha channel options) and antique.

Filter operations include colour limiting, anti-aliasing, video filtering, and median filtering.

The Convolve option allows you to do operations such as sharpening, edge-detection, motion-blurs, or relief maps of the current image – it's even possible to create your own.

You can composite pictures, using both the swap buffer and an alpha channel. Image transformations now include not only flip, mirror, roll, and shear, but also fantastic two-dimensional and three-dimensional perspective rotations that are much faster than those found in Amiga paint programs.

Distort operations include alpha-channel and wave distortion, swirling, pinch/punch, polar blur and mosaic, and spherize.

The Dream distortion is a particularly nice effect for use in animations. It creates a wavy, swirling effect, similar to what you often see on low-budget television shows when a character moves in or out of a dream sequence. All of these effects are completely adjustable in intensity.

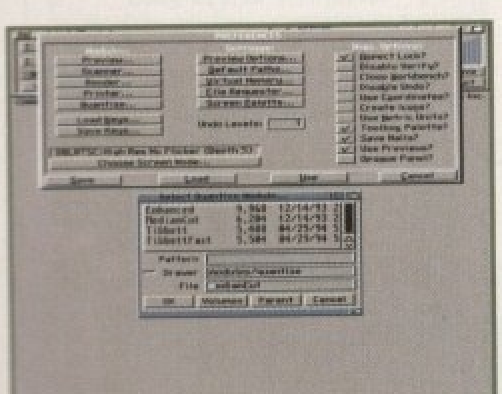
The real fun, though, comes under the Special Effects menu. There are 12 menu buttons here, but you'll actually find hundreds of special effects available to you.

The classic ImageFX Remove Feature (remove everything in a selected region by pulling the edges together) and Oil Transfer (makes the image look like an oil painting), as well as Disperse and Roughen, are found here.

Apply Texture lets you map a texture behind your graphic to make it appear as if it's actually been painted on another surface.

Dozens of textures are included, such as bond paper, granite, fibers, sidewalk, tile, stucco, tree bark, leather, and woodgrain, or you can create your own in a paint program.

Straw makes it appear as if your painting was drawn on coloured straw – it's a weird effect, but interesting. Crystallize is very impressive – depending on the grid size, perturbation and sparkle amounts you choose. It can make your image look as if it's being viewed through a jewel, or as if it's actually made out of coloured crystals.



*ImageFX's preferences screen*

Next is a series of lighting effects, and these can result in some of the most dramatic effects of any image-processing program. These effects not only place impressive stars and lens flares on your image, but they also affect the brightness of pixels around them.

So if you place a bright star effect next to an aircraft image, the fuselage around the exploding flare will be realistically brightened as if an actual flare had exploded next to it.

This is particularly impressive when using the lightning effect – you can adjust the area around the lightning bolt so that it "lights up" as well.

Lightning is fully adjustable and variable. By varying the bolt slightly over the frames of an animation you can create some very realistic lightning effects.

### TILING

Next, there's Hockney tiling, a completely controllable tiling effect that's useful for creating explosive wipes. Finally, there's PaintFX.

If you've ever seen Fractal Painter on Windows or the Macintosh, you've probably been impressed by the program's ability to reproduce realistic painting styles.

PaintFX lets you choose a brush stroke and have it applied to an already completed image, allowing you to automatically create Painter-like effects. You can choose simple stroke brushes, or complex IFF brushes for truly weird effects.

Speaking of painting, ImageFX 2.0 is no slouch in that department either. You won't want to use it as your primary paint program – working on the preview screen is a bit awkward, although it's been made much less so than in previous releases.

You can lock the aspect ratio of the preview screen so that it matches the original picture, and work on HAM8 or high-colour preview screens.

Almost all operations have been speeded up, particularly the airbrush, which now operates in real-time and has an adjustable radius, nozzle size, and roughness.

There are now a wide variety of drawing modes. Some emulate natural-media: watercolour, crayon, charcoal, chalk, felt tip, and fingerpaint.

Others affect colours already there: smudge, disperse, relief, add, sharpen, blur, value, saturation, hue, colour, lighten, darken, and colourize.

There are also a variety of styles, some of which allow you to combine your picture with another in the swap buffer. These include maximum, minimum, fade out and in, mandala, pantograph, trace through, and rub through.

When drawing, you can choose to have the brush edges feathered out or in, or anti-aliased. I wouldn't use ImageFX to create images from scratch, but I certainly would suggest it for changing mundane art into the surreal and fantastic.

Placing text on your image has been made much easier. Multiple lines of text can now be created simultaneously, and you can even load and save short text files directly into the text requester.

All of the draw modes can be applied to text, so you can, for instance, use text to rub through to an underlying image. Similar effects can be created with brush images.

ImageFX now supports multiple brushes which can easily be swapped back and forth from a brush list. It also supports loading 38 different graphic formats, from the common to the esoteric.

Actually, one of the supported formats is the AmigaDOS 3.0 DataTypes library, so if you have DataTypes for additional formats installed on your system, they're supported as well.

There are only 27 savers, omitting some formats, but realistically you're probably not going to be using your Amiga to create images in MacPaint or Koala formats.

You can also grab screens and brushes from the system directly into ImageFX. The program also supports MAGIC, a 24-bit image-sharing standard that is adopted by others which will allow multiple applications to open and work on a single image buffer.

Finally, ImageFX can directly grab images from scanners and frame grabbers. It supports Epson scanners, the PP&S Framegrabber and Framegrabber 256, the IV24 frame grabber, VLAB, and the Sharp JX-100.

Although its input features are strong, as the latest beta I examined, printing was ImageFX's only weak point. It doesn't have the plethora of printing controls and poster creation abilities found in ASDG's Art Department Professional.

On the plus side, though, it does include full-featured drivers for outputting to PostScript or the Primera dye-sublimation colour printer.

## The bottom line

*Product: ImageFX 2.0*
*Supplier: Nova Design*
*Price: TBA*
*Phone: Not available. Email kermit@cup.portal.com, or contact your local dealer*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 8 |
| **Implementation** | 8 |
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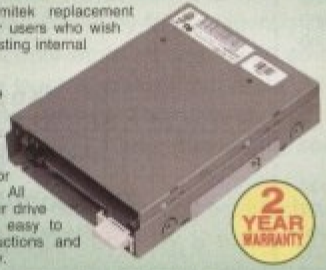
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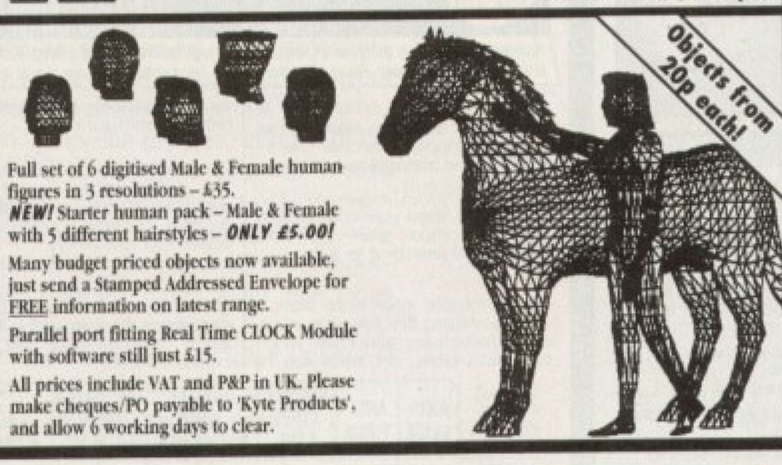
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# Prime cut

*Turn your Amiga into a video editor with the Hama A-Cut. Gareth Lofthouse finds it a snip*

There is a great need for products like this. If you've ever been subjected to a viewing of someone else's home video you will know this. Wobbly visual records of weddings, birthdays and holidays, these rambling tapes turn our biggest days into catalogues of boredom.

At least now, with the help of Hama A-Cut, you can scrap the irrelevant dross and start putting some structure into your videos.

The A-Cut turns your Amiga into an editor for use with most video types including VHS-C, VHS-S or HI-8. It is suitable for all players that have a Control-L interface, meaning that it can be used with most machines in practice.

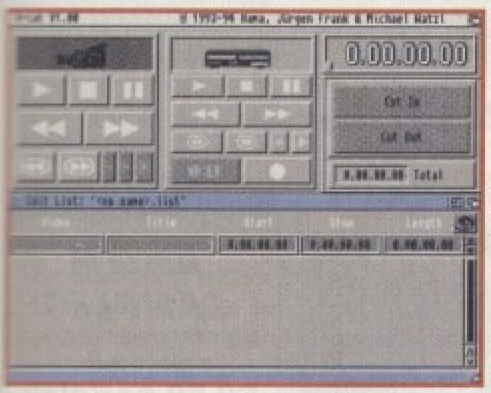
What you get is a control unit, an infrared remote controller and the all important A-Cut software. Despite all the leads, setting it up is easy with the help of the good quality instructions supplied.

Although it doesn't exactly look like £200, the control unit is sturdily designed with a few pleasantly simple controls.The source player is plugged directly into the control unit whereas the recorder is operated by remote control.,

This means that the A-Cut must be adjusted to match the infrared system code of the recorder. Thankfully this can be done automatically via the program without too much of a problem.

Once the A-Cut has been configured, the user is presented with the interface. Large clear icons make operating the editor a simple matter, with prompts to guide you through more complicated procedures.

The beginner is well catered for with an on-line help facility giving explanations on every possible command or function. This is the sort of detail that gives the package an air of professionalism.



*The interface has large icons and displays information clearly, helping the user to create an edit list efficiently.*

When it comes to selecting clips from the source tape, any number of scenes can be defined. To get professional results, accurate single frame editing is possible if the connected player features RC time code.

The time code display on the A-Cut interface is the same as you would find in a professional editing suite, giving the user a point of reference right down to a specific frame.

Vital for any would-be editor, the jog shuttle is the most convenient method of finding specific frames accurately. Unfortunately, this was the one area in which the equipment was disappointing.

The shuttle's inner ring is fine when it comes to the frame-by-frame viewing of film. However, it only works at one speed so it fails to give the level of control that it should over slow-motion speeds. This is a serious complaint considering its importance in an editing unit.

Much better is A-Cut's edit list which allows you to log each shot by a name with its respective time-code reading. This means that clips can be organised and found efficiently.

Clips can be assembled from different videos, although this will involve some fiddling since care must be taken to rewind each tape back to the beginning after each cassette change.

Once an edit list has been compiled it can be previewed, allowing the user to check all clips prior to recording. The film can be restructured at this stage since clips can be shifted or copied elsewhere in the edit list.

For the Amiga enthusiast, an ARexx interface has been provided so that A-Cut can communicate with other programs supporting the language. This means that a video film can be produced with a title program in a single operation while editing.

Those with more technical experience may also find the optimisation facilities useful. Most people, however, need not worry about this as the default settings seem perfectly adequate.

## Great potential

**From the moment you open the instructions, this product shows unusual class. At this price you may think that a good manual can be taken for granted, but anyone who's torn their hair over Hi-fi instructions will know otherwise.**

**The well-planned interface makes defining the required scenes simple. With some guidance from the help facility, beginners should be able to become fully-fledged editors within an hour or so.**

**It's a shame that such a well-designed package should be let down by an inadequate jog shuttle; this problem will have to be resolved if the A-Cut is to perform as well as it should. Otherwise the unit works very well, giving the potential for some surprisingly professional results. It could have been cheaper, but A-Cut is well worth considering for the serious amateur or a budget business project.**

**Buy one of these and you might start making videos that are actually worth watching. Then you can start learning to hold the camera straight.**

## SYSTEM ESSENTIALS

RED = Essential **BLACK** = Recommended

1 Mb RAM

2.0 Kickstart

## The bottom line

*Product: Hama A-Cut*
*Supplier: Hama PVAC Ltd.*
*Tel: 0256 708110*
*Price £199*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 9 |
| **Implementation** | 8 |
| **Value for money** | 7 |
| **Overall** | 8 |

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# Tools of the trade




**Part 3**

*You've mastered the window. You've conquered menus and screens. Now Michael Milne shows you how to control gadgets in Blitz*

Gadgets have been by far the most brilliant invention of any intuition system. Whether it is Workbench for the Amiga or Windows for the PC, you won't see a single program for sale without some gadgets.

But why are they so popular? Well gadgets are by far the most interactive tool to be found in workbench. With them you can take user input, display information or have your own logos and designs on screen, and all this comes with such relative ease that almost puts you to sleep.

So how do we do it? The first thing that you should know about gadgets in Blitz is that they are handled in groups. A group is made up of a window full of gadgets – i.e. all gadgets relating to the gathering/displaying of information for one purpose.

An example of such a group would be for a database file where one group of gadgets is used to take name and address information from the user.

The easiest way to group gadgets is to remember that they can *only* be used in windows and only one group of gadgets can be assigned per window. After you have decided which gadgets you need and for what purpose, you can then continue with the declaring of them. Yes, that's right, Gadgets are just like menus in the sense that they need to be declared before they can be used.

This is how we do it. A typical "Textgadget" is as below:

```
Textgadget 0,10,10,0,1,"Hello there!"
```

If you check your reference manual, Chapter 26-1, you can see that the first number is the group id number, or as Blitz calls them "GadgetLists".

After that follows the X,Y coordinates which are both relative to the top-left corner of the window in which they will be used.

Then follows the flag parameter which is used for extra functions, which can be seen on the table on the same page.

I have currently set this to zero which makes the gadget a plain text gadget, but if I had made it equal to one then it could be toggled on and off by the user.

After that is the gadget's own id number so that we can identify the gadget itself and the text which appears inside the gadget.

After you have declared all your gadgets you are ready to start using them, which couldn't be simpler as all you have to do is to extend the window command by one more parameter – this is the gadget list id number which for the gadget above would be zero.

Here's an example to demonstrate. First of all we need all the usual things for Workbench compatability:

```
WbStartup
WbenchToFront_
WbToScreen 0
Use Screen 0
ev.l=0
```

Now let's define our gadget:

```
TextGadget 0,20,18,0,1,"Click on me to Quit!"
```

and open our window as the active window with our gadget attached:

```
Window 0,120,70,200,40,$1000,"My Window",1,2,0
```

We can use the Events system, as used in the last tutorial, to wait for the user to press our gadget. This can be done by waiting for the value $20:

```
Repeat
ev=0
ev=WaitEvent
Until ev=$20 and GadgetHit=1
```

As you can see we can also check to see which gadget was hit by using 'GadgetHit'. Now we just close down:

```
CloseWindow 0
Free GadgetList 0
EndCompile
```

and run the program and you'll see how easy it is to produce an interactive ➤

## Gadgets and Gadtools: Are they compatible?

In a word, yes. If you are having problems with getting those old gadgets to work with the new ones then don't despair as help is at hand.

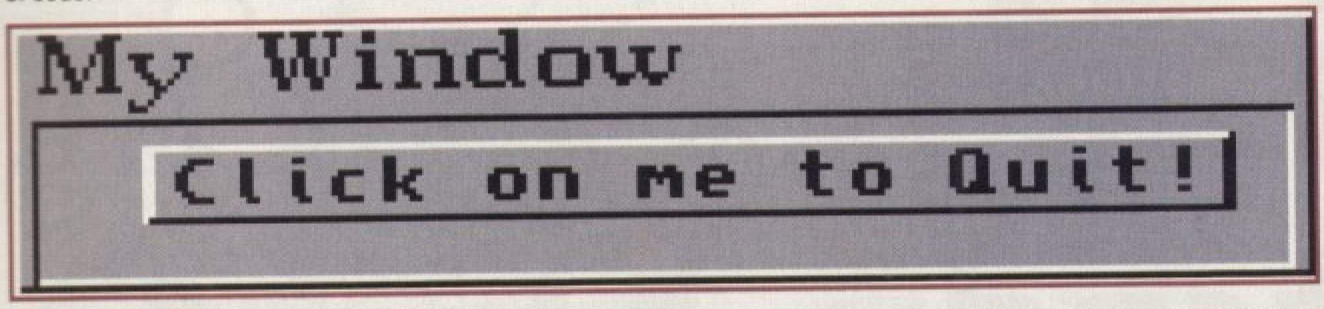
In the last issue I mentioned about subscribership to the Blitz User Magazine with continual updates to the Blitz language. Well, if you are a subscriber then you should have received issue number six.

On the new libs included on the disks are some extensive updates to the gadgets' and gadgtools' libraries, making them almost completely compatible.

Therefore, if you are experiencing difficulties with gadgets and gadtools and you are not a subscriber, write in straight away to: *Blitz User Magazine Subscription, Guildhall Leisure Services, Unit 15, Guildhall Industrial Estate, Kirksandall, Doncaster DN3 1QR*

window with gadgets in only twelve lines of code.

*Gadgets: Simpler than buttering toast!*




By now you should have noticed how the grouping system of gadget lists works and how you can see which gadget was hit by using the id number.

If you have two windows open and you have one gadget list for each then don't worry, because you can still find out which window the gadget came from.

You can do this by using the EventWindow command which tells you the id number of the window. Then you can check the gadget in the same way as above and you'll know which gadget was used from which list, by knowing which list was assigned to which window.

The gadget just used is one of the four basic gadgets which the Amiga 500 supported, the others being: Shape Gadget, String Gadget and Slider Gadget.

But if you own an Amiga 1200 then you'll almost definitely know about theGadtools extension to the old gadgets, bringing almost complete flexibility to your programs.

GadTools are just as easy to use as Gadgets. You declare them at the beginning just like menus and gadgets and you can even put them in the same Gadget list as normal Gadgets.

The difference comes in attaching them to a window. You still put the GadgetList parameter at the end of the window command but you also need to add another command after you have opened your window.

This command is:AttachGtList. This command has two parameters – GadgetList Id number and Window Id number. So if we had some GadTools in the previous program we would add the following line after opening our window:

```
AttachGtList 0,0
```

Now let's actually add some GadTools to our program. Remember you can only proceed with this section if you have an Amiga 600 or higher. Workbench compatable:

```
WbStartup
WbenchToFront_
WbToScreen 0
Use Screen 0
ev.l=0
```

Now let's define our gadget and gadtool:

```
TextGadget 0,20,18,0,1,"Click on me to Quit!"
GTText 0,2,20,20,160,14,"",0,"This is an info box!"
```

and open our window as the active window with our gadgetlist attached:

```
Window 0,120,70,200,40,$1000,"My Window",1,2,0
```

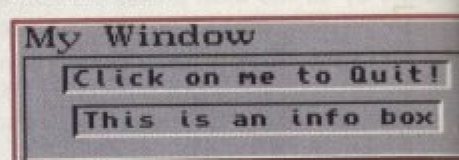
attach our GadTool:

```
AttachGTList 0,0
```

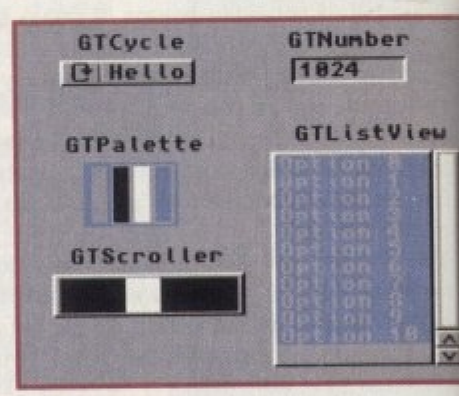
then we wait for the user to press our normal gadget by waiting for the event code $20 and close down:

```
Repeat
ev=0
ev=WaitEvent
Until ev=$20 and GadgetHit=1
CloseWindow 0
Free GadgetList 0_
End
```

And as well as showing the simplicity of GadTools this also demonstrates the complete compatability that the B.U.M. update brings between Gadgets andGadTools.




*Notice our new GadTool under the original one*




*Just a taste of what GadTools can do for you*

Unfortunately there is one minor problem with GadTools, and that is that you can't use events to tell you when a GadTool has been pressed (i.e. Event = $20does not work).

So the only way around this is to wait until the GadgetHit command returns the right GadTools Id number instead of waiting for the event code.

In a way this can be used to your advantage in the sense that if you have a gadget list of both gadgets and gadtools mixed together, you can determine whether or not an old gadget was used if an Event of $20 is returned. If not then you know that a GadTools was probably used.

## HELP is at hand

**If you have any questions that you need addressing from reading this column then you can write to Michael Milne, Blitzing on the Amiga, c/o Amiga Computing, Europress Publications Ltd, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. (NB: Please state what machine you are using and any periferals you have!)**

## Retrieving information

In the original gadgets there is only one major gadget which can gather information from the user and this is the StringGadget. The string gadget has an area of memory dedicated to receiving information from the user when he/she uses that gadget.

There are several options which you have in controlling these gadgets, ranging from pre-setting the contents of this gadget to clearing them completely, as well as being able to read the contents.

Here is a quick list of the commands to hand:

```
ClearString
SetString
ResetString
```

(See Ref.Manual Chapter 26-6 onwards for parameters)

If you wanted to pre-set the string with a response you can do this with theSetString command, whereas if you wanted the StringGadget cleared before the user uses it then this can be done with ClearString.

There is one thing to note about StringGadgets, and that is they have to be activated before the user can enter information into them. This is normally done when the user clicks on the gadget with the mouse and is shown by a cursor which appears in the gadget.

But if you wanted to ask the user a question and then make him/her write the response in the gadget, you can do this with the ActivateString command and then wait until he presses return (Event code 64).

To retrieve the response that was entered into the gadget into a string variable, you use the StringText$ command detailed in Chapter 26-5.

Information from GadTools can be retrieved in almost the same way by using GTGetString to retrieve information from GTStrings and by using GTGetInteger to retrieve information from GTIntegers.

The only other information retrievable from a GadTool is one of its tags, as explained in B.U.M.#5, by using GTGetAttrs. Here is the syntax for the GadTool retrieval commands as I don't think they are documented anywhere:

```
String$=GTGetString(GadgetList,Id)
Val=GTGetInteger(GadgetList,Id)
Val=GTGetAttrs(GadgetList,Id,Tag)
```

Well it's time for me to say goodbye but don't forget, keep practicing and try out as many gadgets as you can, as only practice will make you confident enough to keep going.

In the next issue I will start on the first part of a WorkBench compatible program, using all the information I've tried to cram into your heads in the last three issues, including this one.

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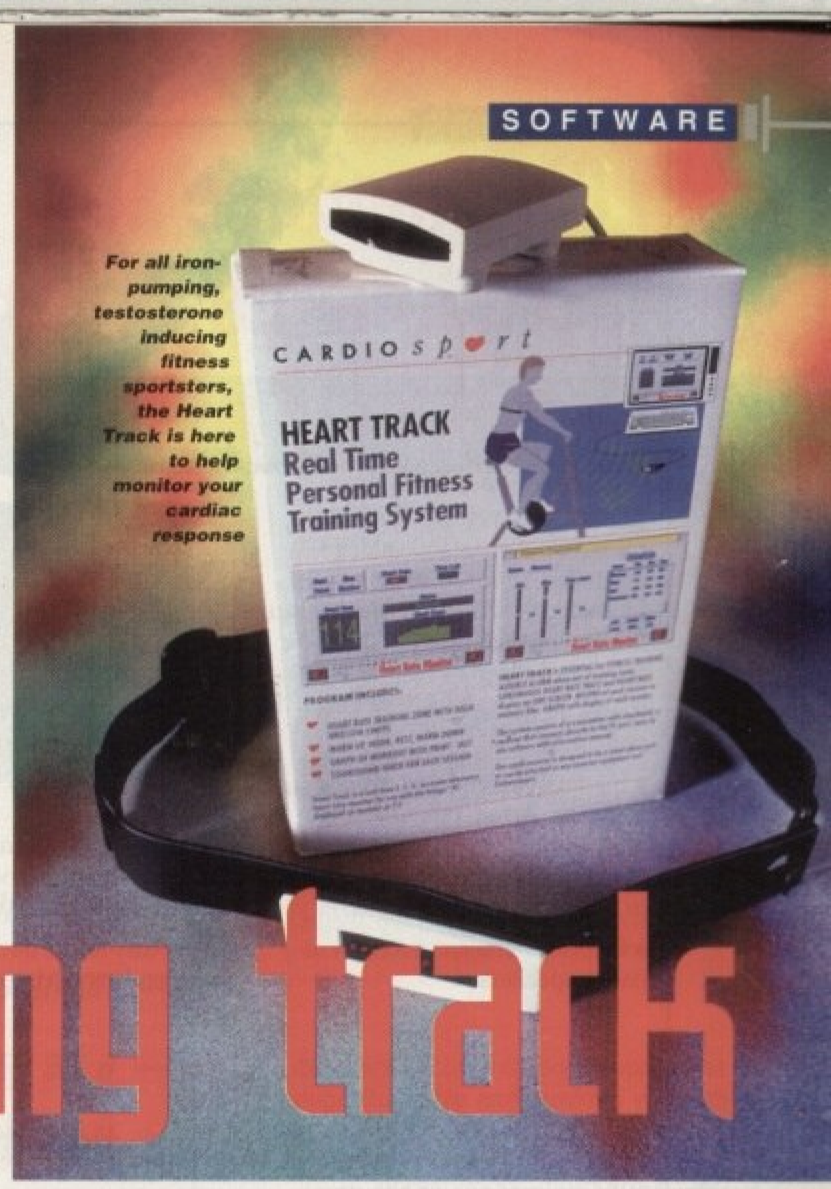
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# Keeping track

*Computers, exercise. Exercise, computers. Adam Phillips reviews a product that bridges these two previously opposing pastimes...*




*For all iron-pumping, testosterone inducing fitness sportsters, the Heart Track is here to help monitor your cardiac response*

Take two stereotypes – the typical exercise fanatic as perceived by the general populous. A health conscious, active and thoroughly body-trained individual who likes the outdoors, eats high fibre food and believes that their bodies are indeed temples.

The commonly perceived computer nut though is decidedly health ignorant, inactive other than the stabbing motion of fingers on keyboard and believe that their bodies are usually the equivalent of a Sainsbury's TV dinner.

These extremes are changing as we speak, as more and more people from all walks of life realise that computers can make life much easier but, when confronted with a program to aid body training, the two seemingly alien-to-each-other hobbies still jar in the mind somewhat.

Heart Track, to the initiated, is a utility to help monitor that vital organ's activities during exercise. To the uninitiated, the heart is a pump-like vessel situated slightly to the left on your torso. Opening the box reveals a single disk, a chest band, a transmitter and receiver.

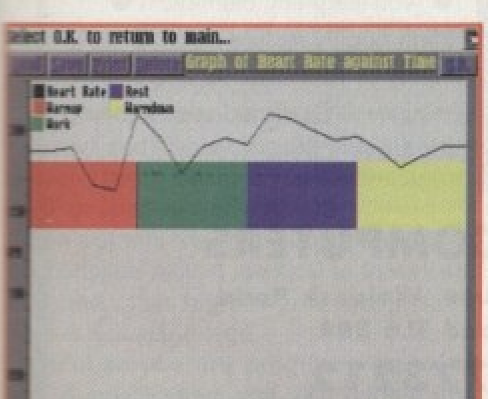
The process is simple. Attach the transmitter to the chest band and put it round your rippling torso, plug the receiver into the Amiga, load in the software and you're in possession of a package that senses ECG signals.

The transmitter captures these and sends them to the receiver, which in turn pumps them in to the program to be displayed on screen for your delight. That's it.

Well, almost. Also included is a foam hoop that apparently (although it's not clear at all) attaches to the handle of an exercise bike or other contraption which then allows you, I assume, to fix the receiver onto this with a Velcro band for a more consistent signal. The whole affair is just a touch flimsy and, as far as I can see, pretty redundant.




*Clear readouts help you see your progress through a haze of sweat*




*Consult the graph for an overview of your workout*

The program itself offers an extremely simple-to-use system, mainly due to the fact there really isn't that much to it. If you just want a general heart reading, pressing on start begins the monitoring.

For the more serious users, schedules can be created which cover the four basic areas of training – warm-up, work, rest and warm down.

By adjusting the time of each and the desired heart minimum and maximum limits, the computer keeps a track of each session, providing the user with a countdown and a warning alarm when you step out of the predefined heart parameters.

Once the exercise session is completed, a graph can be called up detailing, via colour coding, your heart rate during each stage of your workout. These results can be saved or printed out for future reference and for Charles Atlas "before" and "after" comparisons later on.

## RANGE

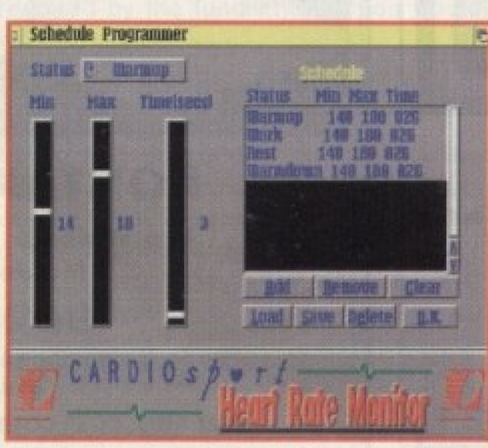
Due to the fact the whole thing is wired into the Amiga, it's hardly the most portable of devices. It's range is a rather limited four feet but can be increased through the use of an additional Infrared system that expands the range up to ten feet.

While being ideal for running on the spot and multi-gym work, for the more active punter this is obviously limiting.

Heart Track sets out to do a simple task and achieves its goal very effectively, but the real question is whether the package is really worth £95.

The average price of a wrist watch with the same facilities but minus the hefty equipment is around the same price bracket, give or take five pounds.

Because of this, it's hard to recommend something that at the end of the day doesn't offer the versatility and portability essential to the all-round sports person. On the other hand, if you're a couch potato exerciser with an Amiga who desperately wants to get themselves in shape but are frightened to step outside in case the sun actually touches your white, opaque skin, then this is a relatively useful product at a relatively hefty price.




*Design your own schedule by deciding the time of each section and heart rate targets within them. Then save them for continual use and appraisal*

## SYSTEM ESSENTIALS

**RED** = Essential **BLACK** = Recommended

2.5 Workbench

Hard drive

## The bottom line

*Product: Cardio sport Heart Track*
*Supplier: Healthcare Technology Limited*
*Phone: 0243 528800*
*Price: £94.95*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 9 |
| **Implementation** | 9 |
| **Value for money** | 5 |
| **Overall** | 6 |

# A liberated society

## No matter how hard people try, they can't seem to nail the lid down on AMOS. Andrew Deeley looks at a product that promises to breath a bit of life back into the ailing language.

AMOS users all around the world will no doubt have been feeling rather dejected just lately. Francois has not given much thought to the product and Europress have had to put a halt on new developments.

This has led to other languages stealing the limelight away from the package that once ruled supreme.

All is not lost though. There are still thousands of dedicated AMOS users and, while a sizeable user base remains, third-party developers will continue to cater for their needs.

One such company is the Ayr based T-Soft who, after several months of development, have released their official Liberator extension – a product that releases AMOS from many of the constraints that bind it.

In short, it enables AMOS to access over 1300 functions from 47 Commodore and third-party libraries. Unfortunately this means that you will not know where to start.

The possibilities are endless. With access to the Intuition, Dos, Req and Rexxhost libraries, you will be knocking up your own system-legal utilities in no time at all.

### SUPPORT

Further more, because Liberator provides support for the Intuition library, the program can open up its own window upon the Amiga's Workbench screen and multitask properly. Something that was simply not possible until now.

That is not the end of it. Liberator is compatible with all Commodore library calls, including those available in version 3.1 of the operating system.

Those that have a data burst cache between their earlobes will realise that this, coupled with the Intuition support, means AGA compatibility. Well almost.

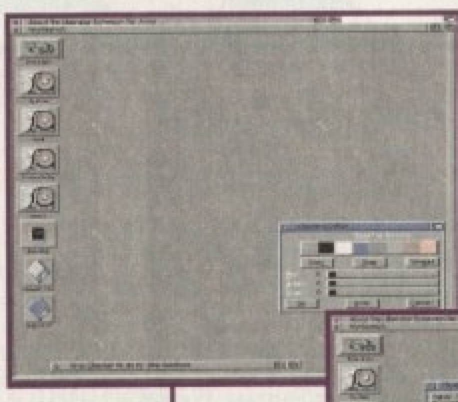
With Liberator installed it is possible to open up your own AGA screen from within AMOS. But unfortunately, because of the non OS friendly manner in which AMOS handles screens, you will not be able to use any of the commands that display text, graphics, Sprites or Bobs.

However, you could establish your own Viewport and display images in 256 colours or even Ham8. Useful if you wanted to write a GIF or Jpeg viewer in AMOS.

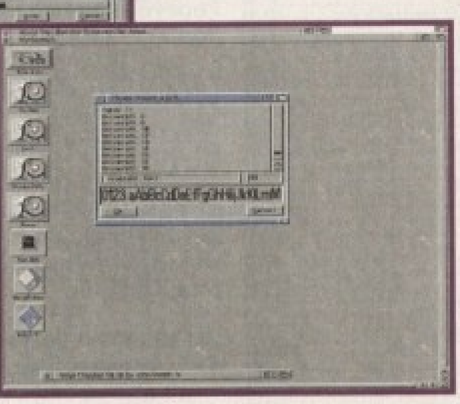
The commands that access the library functions are almost identical to those used in C and other high-level languages, but there is one advantage.

Because you are programming in the AMOS environment you also benefit from the editors syntax checking, something that C programmers would love.

Lets say that you wanted to utilise the file



The ReqTools palette requester can now be exploited in your AMOS programs.



The rather nice looking Font requester is easily achievable with Liberator

requester from the ASL library. Once you had set up an array to hold the parameters required by the function call, you would type:

```
FILE=F(REQ,0)
```

In the above example, REQ holds the address of the parameter array and, if successful, FILE returns a TRUE value that points to the file name chosen by the user.

If you were to write the same line in C you might type:

```
file=aslrequest(&REQ,0)
```

As you can see the two are quite similar.

## Coming soon

The best is still yet to come. Close to completion is an upgrade for Liberator called OrgAsm (which stands for ReORGanised ASseMbler) a really exciting utility that turns GUI's, created with GadToolsBox, into a form suitable for use with Liberator.

For those that do not know, GadToolsBox is a shareware development tool that allows you to design your own front-ends in a very easy and intuitive manner.

Having designed your GUI, GadTools will then create the source code that sets up and communicates with your user interface.

When released it will cost £2.50, as will all further updates to Liberator, which among other things will include an AMOS Professional version.

Liberator's documentation is supplied as an Amiga Guide file and provides you with all the necessary information concerning its installation and use.

Instructions concerning all the various function calls are not supplied. However, you are told where to get hold of the Commodore Autodocs and an address is given for a PD library that can supply Amiga Guide documents for all the third-party libraries.

Learning how to use library function calls is not all that difficult, especially if you have already gained a good knowledge of programming in AMOS.

### LEARNING

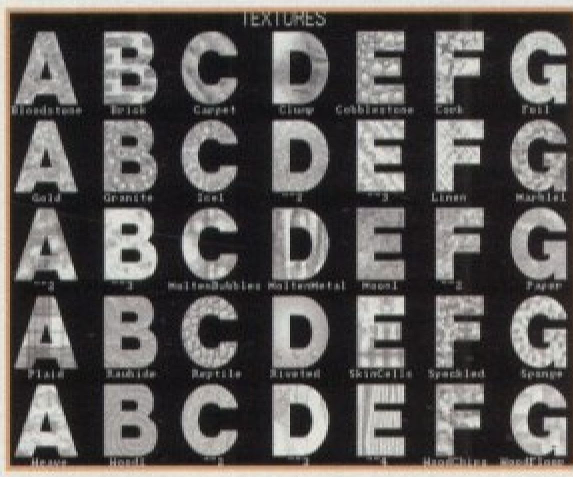
On the other hand, beginners will no doubt find a learning curve ahead of them. Although, as the programmer says, "This learning process is what keeps us addicted to the great Amiga, so don't despair!!"

Liberator is one of the most exciting releases that AMOS has seen in a long time. I cannot see it convincing those of us that have already moved onto other languages, such as C, to switch our allegiance back to AMOS, but it will certainly brighten up the lives of those who have stuck with this legendary programming package.

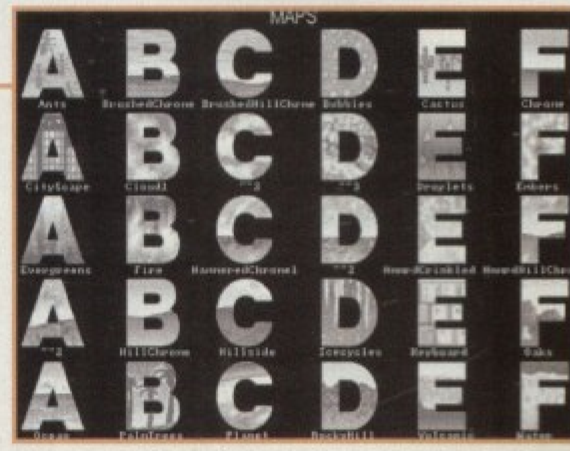
## The bottom line

*Product: Liberator*
*Supplier: T-Soft*
*Price: £22.50*
*Address: PO Box 598, Ayr, KA6 6PL*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 8 |
| **Implementation** | 8 |
| **Value for money** | 8 |
| **Overall** | 8 |




The preview screen allows you to take a peek at the options available. These fills are in the textures group




The map textures above are the best of the bunch

# Flawed fonts

***With a name like 2 Many Fonts, here's a package that promises a lot. Does it really offer tantalising titles or is it just another font package? Gareth Lofthouse investigates***

At one time, colour font applications were expensive but these days you can pick up capable packages at reasonable prices. 2 Many Fonts is cheaper than some commercial offerings in this area, but at £59.95 it's not exactly a snip. So is it worth it ?

"Over 100,000 colourfont combinations!" the makers boast on the front of the box, a claim that is impressive but perhaps misleading. In practice, this means that the user gets ten type faces which can be combined with 205 seamless fill patterns.

Nevertheless there is ample room for experimentation, especially considering 2 Many Fonts is used in conjunction with paint programs like DPaint or Brilliance.

Getting started could have been easier. The packaging is cheap and the introduction manual is put together in a rather shoddy manner– I'd have hoped for more considering the price. Furthermore, we'd recommend manual installation if you're planning to use a hard disk

The typefaces themselves aren't too impressive. Too many of them look like left-overs from 60's album covers – not too useful if you're wanting to make video titles, for example.

What's more, there are only two font sizes, although at least variation can be achieved using italics or bold. On the plus side, anti-aliasing is good, giving the characters smooth edges.

The program does offer a plethora of brushes with which to create your fill patterns. These are grouped into five categories: designs, patterns, textures, gradient fills and environment maps.

Using these you can develop fonts with anything from simple gold textures to detailed designs resembling wallpaper. The quality of the patterns is variable, but given the amount to choose from this is not a serious complaint.

As you'd expect, these textures are fully interchangeable with a stack of palettes, though the brushes usually look better in their default colour.

A small but time-saving addition is the palette of composite colours. These are 'video safe' so that colours won't bleed on the video screen.

Time-saving in general is an advantage you'd particularly look for in a package like this, but in other areas 2 Many Fonts doesn't seem as quick and easy as it could have been.

Once font and brush styles have been selected, it basically becomes a matter of knowing your way round your paint package well. Beginners might therefore struggle – thankfully there's a helpline you can phone.

## VARIATIONS

The manual gives some examples of the sort of variations that can be created by using, for example, DPaint. The font appearance can be altered by resizing a brush, or by adding thicker edges creating a bevelled effect.

Once typed, a title can be picked up as a brush and dragged several pixels along, creating an effect similar to a 3D extruded title.

Fonts can also be given shadows using DPaint. These are a few examples of the variations that can be made, but Mediascape can't take much credit in this respect. These enhancements rely entirely on your use of the paint package.

Initially 2 Many Fonts, with its range of colour typefaces, may seem like good value. However, the fact that there are PD colourfont packages available ranging from £5 to £15 puts things into a different perspective.

With PD software offering hundreds of clip fonts and the ability to edit them, it is hard to see how 2 Many Fonts can justify its relatively high cost.




The utilities disk supplied gives you examples of some of the variations that can be achieved using your paint package

## Verdict

2 Many Fonts could have been a welcome addition to anyone's software collection if it had come at the right price. As a source of textured fonts it is a good enough product, offering a wide choice of brushes to enhance a title's appearance.

The trouble is, that's about all it amounts to. When it comes to playing around with the fonts, it's a matter of reaching for your DPaint tutorials.

This raises the point that you could design any of these fonts and brushes in DPaint or Brilliance yourself with the aid of some PD colour font packs, so unless you're very short of time the advantage of using 2 Many Fonts seems small considering the cost.

It's not going to make things a whole lot easier for the beginner either. A sub-standard explanatory manual and awkward implementation creates some confusion, even for those familiar with the ins and outs of their paint program.

If cash isn't a problem and your looking for a collection of pre-designed fill-textures, 2 Many Fonts should be considered. Images are of sufficient quality to use at, say, the low end of the video market. For most people, though, its not worth the asking price. Offering little more than the cheaper alternatives, 2 Many Fonts costs too many pennies.

## The bottom line

*Product: 2 Many Fonts*
*Supplier: Meridian Software*
*Tel: 0533 863501*
*Price: £59.95*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ease of use** | 5 |
| **Implementation** | 6 |
| **Value for money** | 5 |
| **Overall** | 5 |

# E.M.COMPUTERGRAPHIC

THE U.K.'S NUMBER 1 AMIGA FONT AND CLIPART DISTRIBUTORS - AMIGA COMPUTING ISSUE 52

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# Install with ease

*Steve White opens the door to creating your own installation scripts in our guide to using the official Commodore Installer*




## Part 1

**To use Installer you are expected to license with Commodore USA. However, with the problems Commodore are having at present, it would probably be considered fairly safe to use the product without a license agreement.**

***Amiga Computing*'s license agreement was never returned but we use Installer anyhow. However, the decision to use the Installer is purely yours and *Amiga Computing* cannot be held responsible for any breaches of the license agreement by readers.**

Up until recently the Amiga has never had its own totally dedicated installation program, and in the past hard drive owners have had to wrestle with AmigaDOS script files, programs that shut out the Workbench environment, installation procedures where flexibility goes out of the window and many programs that are installable, provided the user does it by hand.

Fortunately, Commodore came to the rescue by developing an installation program that could be programmed by anyone, was totally flexible and could function quite happily from Workbench.

This program – Installer – is now used by most software developers, although game developers continue to neglect its advantages.

What this tutorial aims to achieve is to teach you how to use the language and apply it to your programs. However, I will not be concentrating solely on hard drive users, as Installer is quite capable of installing software to another floppy disk.

In order to follow this tutorial you will need to own an Amiga running Workbench 2.0 or higher. Obviously, you will need to apply the techniques you learn in this series yourself as I cannot write example scripts dedicated to software which I know nothing about.

There will be plenty of examples, but these will be purely for demonstrative purposes.

You should copy the Installer program found in the C: directory of *Amiga Computing* Cover Disks into the C: directory of your hard drive or floppy disk.

Installer was created by Commodore as a tool for hard drive owners and floppy owners to install software with the minimum amount of fuss. It allows total control over installation procedures, offering the user a friendly interface to work with in a familiar environment – Workbench.

It is this flexibility that makes Installer so

## Speaking the language

Now we've got that out of the way, let's take a look at the language. The language offers different procedures for installing different types of file. General files, libraries and fonts all have different routines which make installation more intuitive.

Each routine has its own associated commands applicable to the type of file being installed. This means that you can break up your installation scripts into easily readable modules, which makes debugging a hell of a lot easier.

What we'll do now is take a look at a particular routine and take a look at its associated commands.

As an example routine, we will be looking at the one which installs libraries. I will show the routine and then describe each function individually.

If certain functions are missing, the Installer will show a compile error. These functions will be labelled.

```
(copylib
        (prompt "Installing diskfont.library to LIBS:")
        (help @copylib-help)
        (source "Ram:diskfont.library")
        (dest "LIBS:")
        (confirm)
        (nogauge)
)
```

Let's take a look at each command to see what they actually do.

```
(copylib
```

This tells installer that the routine that follows should be understood as a library routine. We don't end the copylib function with parenthesis ) until we have finished the entire routine.

```
(prompt "Installing diskfont.library to LIBS:")
```

This function merely tells the user what is going on. If you don't want to display a message simply type prompt "". Both parenthesis are included () because this function is classed as an independent command. Prompt must always be present.

```
(help @copylib-help)
```

Installer has certain in-built help pages which are displayed when you click on the Help button on the main Installer interface. If you wish to add your own help text you can, but I will be explaining this process later on. Help must always be present.

```
(source "Ram:diskfont.library")
```

This tells Installer which file it is that you want to install. It is always best to first copy everything you wish to install into Ram as Ram is faster and also eradicates multiple disk swapping. Source must always be present.

```
(dest "LIBS:")
```

This tells Installer where the source file should be copied to. This must be a valid assign or path name. Dest must always be present.

```
(confirm)
```

Confirm requires you to okay the copying process by clicking the Proceed button. In the case of libraries, confirm will inform you if you already have that particular library in the LIBS: directory.

It will also inform you of the version number of the library being installed and the one that is already present.

```
(noguage)
```

Whenever a file is copied a blue bar appears indicating the progress of the copying process. You can

werful. It has the ability to cater for all nga set-ups and is also capable of providing error script files should something go wrong.

The Installer itself is not capable of installation alone. In order to function it needs a special script file which it translates and then executes. It is the script file language we shall be looking at.

The language owes most of its structure to Lisp, a language which relies on the heavy use of parenthesis or brackets ().

The parenthesis control all the functions in the language and therefore debugging scripts can prove awkward.

## MASTERING

However, once the actual functions have been understood, more time can be spent on making sure the parenthesis are correct and once these have been mastered, the entire language becomes much clearer.

The parenthesis control the functions in much the same way as parenthesis in mathematical equations – that is to say that the amount of open brackets '(' must be equally matched by the amount of close brackets ')' and vice versa. This is where most of the errors creep in.

Below is an example Installer script. This example's main function is to show the use of parenthesis (don't worry about what it does right now):

```
(copylib
        (prompt "Installing asl.library")
        (help @copy-lib)
        (source "RAM:asl.library")
        (dest "LIBS:")
        (confirm)
```

You will notice that there are the same amount of close brackets as there are open brackets. It is very important to get the bracket amounts equal, otherwise a compile error will occur.

In order to successfully install a program via Installer, there are certain files that are needed. Apart from the actual Installer program, you also need the installation script file and an icon which when double-clicked loads and then directs Installer to your script.

The icon must be a Project and must be attached to your script file. For example, let's imagine you had created a script file called InstallMyProg. You would save the Project icon as InstallMyProg.info to the same directory.

With the icon complete, you then need to direct it to Installer. Clicking once on the icon, select Information from the Icons menu on Workbench and where it reads Default Tool: type in the path of the Installer – say MyDisk:c/Installer as an example.

Add a new Tool Type to the icon and type in:

```
APPNAME=MyProg
```

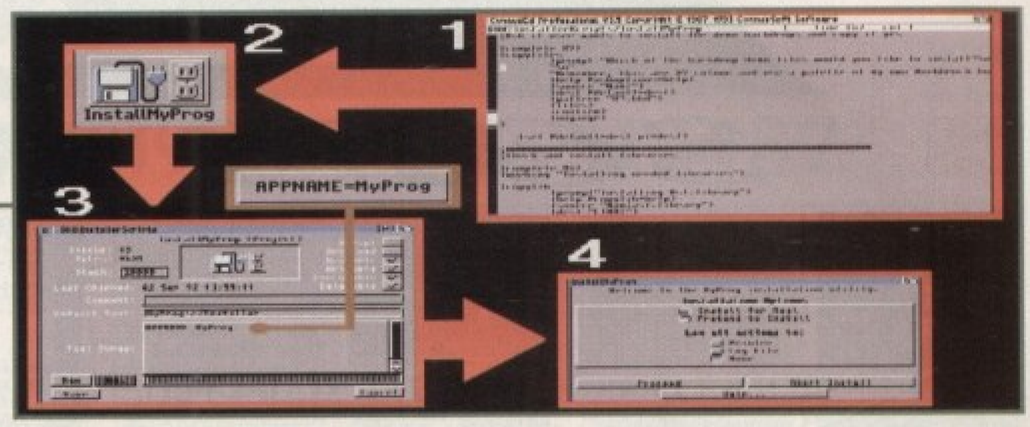
The Appname Tool Type is needed by Installer when it prints Welcome to the installation utility. In this case it would display:

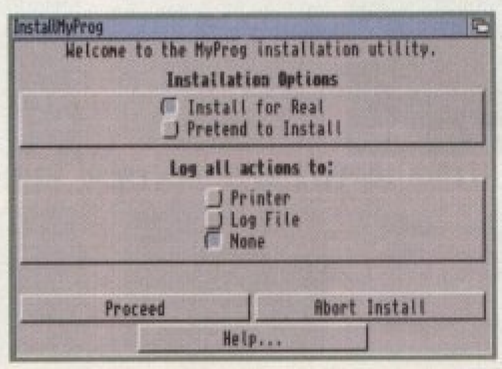
```
Welcome to the MyProg installation utility
```

You will be adding other Tool Type commands to the icon at a later date. For a visual description of the above, check out the diagram.

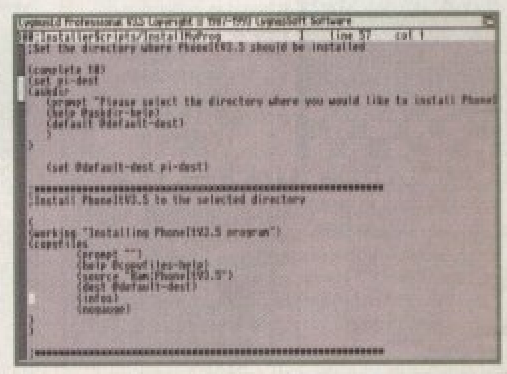
● In next month's article I will provide you with a complete Installer script using the routines explained this month and a few extras so that you can gain a good impression of how to set up a fully working script.

*This diagram shows the processes needed to use Installer. An icon is attached to the script file which in turn is directed to Installer. The Appname command in the icon Tool Types tells Installer to print the message 'Welcome to the installation utility when it is run*




**Thanks to Commodore's Installer program, users can easily install software to floppy or hard drive**



**The script language is difficult to learn, but once mastered proves extremely powerful**

choose to turn this off with the noguage function. If it is neglected the bar will be displayed.

```
)
```

This basically ends the routine by closing the parenthesis opened by (copylib. You must make sure you have the correct amount of close brackets as open brackets, otherwise a compile error will occur.

Hopefully, this will make sense and you will begin to see the way in which the Installer language works.

At this moment in time you will obviously still not know enough about the language to compile your own scripts, but the Installer language dictates that plenty of examples are provided before hand.

So, at the end of this series I will provide a complete listing of the routines and their associated functions as a reference.

Let's now take a look at another form of copying, this time on files. Take a look at the example and I will then explain what each function does afterwards.

```
(copyfiles
        (prompt "Installing MyProg program")
        (help @copyfiles-help)
        (source "Ram:MyProg")
        (dest @default-dest)
        (infos)
        (noguage)
)

(copyfiles
```

As with copylib, but this routine expects to copy files rather than libraries. You could use copyfiles to install a library but it is best to stick with the dedicated routine.

```
(prompt "Installing MyProg program")
```

This is the same as the first example and is used to inform the user what is happening. Must be present.

```
(help @copyfiles-help)
```

Same as the first example but displays the help information associated with the copyfiles routine. Must be present.

```
(source "Ram:MyProg")
```

The file that is to be installed. Must be present.

```
(dest @default-dest)
```

This is the same as the first example, but the destination is contained in a variable called @default-dest. This variable would have been set earlier by the user when asked where to install the program. Variable will be explained later. Must be present.

```
(infos)
```

This tells Installer to copy the .info file (icon) of the file MyProg to the @default-dest. If infos is not specified the icon file will not be copied.

```
(noguage)
```

Same as the first example.

```
)
```

Finishes the routine called copyfiles.



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(CAT 1209 – 1 DISK). This is probably the best version of Pipemania you can get. Very playable and very addictive.

☐ **High Octane**
(CAT 680 – 1 DISK). This is a corking overhead car racer for two players. It's full to the brim with thrills and spills, and plenty of weapon pick ups.

☐ **Klawz the Cat**
(CAT 1735 – 1 DISK). This is a lovely cute platform game, with classic gameplay.

☐ **Knights**
(CAT 1098 – 1 DISK). This just happens to be a most excellent two player overhead adventure game. Very addictive.

☐ **Kung Fu Charlies**
(CAT 1138 – 1 DISK). Now this game is funny. It is a simple platform game with some flying kicks thrown in for a laugh.

☐ **LCD Dreams**
(CAT 1789 – 1 DISK). A collection of four old LCD hand held games revamped for the Amiga. Great stuff.

☐ **Pop Quiz**
(CAT 2250 – 1 DISK). Test your knowledge of pop history with this pop-tastic quiz.

## GAMES

☐ **Red Dwarf Quiz**
(CAT 887 – 1 DISK). Test your knowledge of the TV series with this Dwarf-tastic quiz. It's very tough indeed.

☐ **Road to Hell**
(CAT 565 – 1 DISK). Yet more overhead racing in yet another great game. This time you can customise your car as well.

☐ **Starbase 13**
(CAT 1213 – 2 DISKS). This is an epic graphic adventure with lots to solve. It's very playable, and quite funny.

☐ **Strike-N-Spares**
(CAT 1055 – 1 DISK). Fancy a bit of ten pin bowling? Too much effort for you? Then play this in the comfort of home.

☐ **Tetren**
(CAT 66 – 1 DISK). Tetren is a very good Tetris clone. It features a good selection of new oddities, and two-player option.

☐ **The Real Popeye**
(CAT 2348 – 1 DISK). A totally excellent conversion of the old C64 favourite. Games were games in those days you know!

☐ **Total War**
(CAT 1043 – 1 DISK). A brilliant version of the board game Risk. Six players computer or human compete, and battle.

☐ **Wizard Wars**
(CAT 2959 – 1 DISK). This is a very polished RPG type board game. Quite involved and pretty tough to win.

## ASSASSINS

☐ **Assassins 3**
(CAT 104 – 1 DISK). Megaball – great breakout game. Drip-polished Painter game.

☐ **Assassins 123**
(CAT 173 – 1 DISK). Includes the excellent Artillerus 2 which is brilliantly addictive, and for up to eight players.

☐ **Assassins 114**
(CAT 185 – 1 DISK). International Cricket is on here, and so is Insectoids 2. Brill.

☐ **Assassins 95**
(CAT 286 – 1 DISK). Includes two football manager games which are quite different from each other. Very playable.

☐ **Assassins 133**
(CAT 1139 – 1 DISK). There are two great Columns type games for you on this one.

☐ **Assassins 138**
(CAT 1348 – 1 DISK). Includes the unmissable game Scorched Tanks. Totally addictive, and great multi-player fun.

☐ **Assassins 128**
(CAT 1632 – 1 DISK). Three brilliant versions of some arcade classics. Includes: Space Invasion, Deluxe Pacman and Solar System Wars.

☐ **Assassins 139**
(CAT 2282 – 1 DISK). Includes a good fruit machine game, and a weird breakout.

☐ **Assassins 135**
(CAT 2442 – 1 DISK). Has a brill Backgammon game.

## MUSIC/DEMO

☐ **Fairlight 242**
(CAT 2781 – 1 DISK). Contains a very long video sequence set to the usual techno type music.

☐ **9 Fingers**
(CAT 383 – 2 DISKS). An audio visual feast brought to you from Spaceballs. It's pop-video tastic and no mistake.

☐ **Arte**
(CAT 562 – 1 DISK). A graphical extravaganza of a demo with funky-tronic music.

☐ **Attraction**
(CAT 1243 – 1 DISK). A great music disk with some lovely thoughtful music.

☐ **Banging Raves**
(CAT 213 – 1 DISK). Perhaps not rave exactly, but a good megamix of some classic tunes. A good mix of styles.

☐ **Banging Raves 2**
(CAT 514 – 1 DISK). Another good megamix.

☐ **Basso Continuo**
(CAT 1059 – 1 DISK). Ten excellent funky tunes are on here for your listening pleasure.

☐ **Doop Re-mix**
(CAT 337 – 1 DISK). A good re-mix of that chart topping tune.

☐ **Gastric Ulcer**
(CAT 2724 – 1 DISK). A good collection of some very hard rave tunes. Not for the faint hearted listener.

## MUSIC/DEMO

☐ **Guru Meditation**
(CAT 970 – 1 DISK). The Guru knows all my friends. Nice animated stereogram.

☐ **Jesus On Cheese**
(CAT 1251 – 1 DISK). It's fast and furious in the ready rave cheese round I can tell you.

☐ **Kaos Theory**
(CAT 1114 – 1 DISK). It's rave-ornatic Amiga time with some seriously hard tunes.

☐ **Piece of Mind**
(CAT 980 – 1 DISK). A great 3D extravaganza demo with some very classy music.

☐ **Scoopex 2 Unlimited**
(CAT 2241 – 2 DISKS). Good old Scoopex supplies 3 very well produced 2 Unlimited mixes.

☐ **Sequencial**
(CAT 547 – 1 DISK). A roller coaster of a demo.

☐ **For Your Mind**
(CAT 2462 – 1 DISK). Fast video, fast music, a really moving experience for sure.

☐ **State of the Art**
(CAT 19 – 1 DISK). An all time classic demo. Brilliant visuals and a cracking dance tune.

☐ **Star Trek Rave**
(CAT 2390 – 1 DISK). Is nothing sacred? Apparently not. A silly story with pictures which provides a good laugh.

☐ **Techno Tracks 2**
(CAT 1664 – 1 DISK). Awesome music and some great visuals make this a must!!

***ALL THE DISKS LISTED ON THIS PAGE ARE COMPATIBLE WITH ALL AMIGA COMPUTERS UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED***

## USEFUL

☐ **600 Business Letters**
(CAT 291 – 1 DISK). Lots of letters for lots of things.

☐ **Account Master**
(CAT 1817 – 1 DISK). A good little accounts program to help keep your books.

☐ **Amibase Pro 2**
(CAT 293 – 1 DISK). Probably the best database program you can get. Very usable indeed.

☐ **Astro 22**
(CAT 2120 – 1 DISK). An excellent program to help with your astrological predictions.

☐ **Astronomy**
(CAT 2847 – 1 DISK). Produces very detailed planetary information for astronomers.

☐ **Classic Utilities**
(CAT 1863 – 1 DISK). A true collection of classics that you really should have.

☐ **Create Adventures**
(CAT 1027 – 1 DISK). A very nice authoring program.

☐ **Crossword Creator**
(CAT 2161 – 1 DISK). Takes the strain out for you.

☐ **Crunchers disk**
(CAT 1227 – 1 DISK). If disk space is getting tight then this disk is definitely for you.

☐ **D-Copy 3.1**
(CAT 2582 – 1 DISK). The best disk copier you can get.

☐ **Dynamic Skies**
(CAT 1512 – 1 DISK). An amazing night sky viewer which is feature packed.

## USEFUL

☐ **Easycalc**
(CAT 1042 – 1 DISK). Simply the best spreadsheet.

☐ **Edword Pro 4**
(CAT 2071 – 1 DISK). A brilliant text editor which has a very good feel about it.

☐ **Forecaster**
(CAT 607 – 1 DISK). If you're a betting man/woman, this disk could be up your street.

☐ **Grinder**
(CAT 1249 – 1 DISK). A versatile screen converter.

☐ **Home Budget**
(CAT 1410 – 1 DISK). This is a very effective little money manager/planner program.

☐ **Inscript**
(CAT 2693 – 1 DISK). Home video titling is rarely this easy or effective.

☐ **Mandelmania**
(CAT 820 – 1 DISK – NOT 500). A very fast fractal generator with fast zoom in and out.

☐ **Mandelplot**
(CAT 90 – 1 DISK). An excellent shareware fractal generator. Tons of fractal types.

☐ **Magnum**
(CAT 2666 – 1 DISK). A good disk magazine creator.

☐ **PC Task 2**
(CAT 1281 – 1 DISK). A working demo of this very good PC emulator program.

☐ **Planetarium**
(CAT 1887 – 1 DISK). A simple program to display the position of the planets.

## USEFUL

☐ **Pools Tools 2**
(CAT 442 – 1 DISK). A great rich quick program? Could be couldn't it?

☐ **PP Mini Crunch**
(CAT 638 – 1 DISK – NOT 500). A user friendly interface for the excellent Powerpacker. Very nice.

☐ **S-I-R-D-S**
(CAT 2214 – 1 DISK). Create your very own stereogram pictures and baffle your friends.

☐ **Start of the Art**
(CAT 2317 – 2 DISKS). These disks are packed chocker with various graphics programs.

☐ **Text Engine 4**
(CAT 1464 – 1 DISK). The best word processor there is. Very well suited to the Amiga.

☐ **The Money Program**
(CAT 1811 – 1 DISK). An excellent home money monitor program. Very useful.

☐ **Utility Disk Maker**
(CAT 2371 – 1 DISK). Proves very helpful for creating your own disks, serious or not.

☐ **Virus Checker**
(CAT 770 – 1 DISK). Always the latest version of this essential virus detector/killer.

☐ **Words**
(CAT 1108 – 1 DISK). A handy program to help you solve crosswords and puzzles.

☐ **X Beat Pro**
(CAT 415 – 1 DISK). A very friendly music sequencer program. Very good for learners.

## ANIMATION

☐ **Animation Studio**
(CAT 2406 – 1 DISK). A fantastic program to get you started in animation. Features the onion skin layering technique.

☐ **Boat**
(CAT 933 – 1 DISK). A very nice animation of a typical English garden scene, with a boat.

☐ **Bond's Last Stand**
(CAT 835 – 1 DISK). Bond cops it at last, and not before time too.

☐ **Beach**
(CAT 1566 – 1 DISK). A great single screen picture postcard type animation.

☐ **Human Cannonball**
(CAT 1599 – 1 DISK). An amusing story of how not to be a human cannonball.

☐ **Linus**
(CAT 1018 – 1 DISK). A very original anim with a very good cartoon atmosphere.

☐ **Raging Hormone**
(CAT 2780 – 1 DISK). Poor old hormone tries to pull a bird. He should know better.

☐ **Raging Hormone 2**
(CAT 2473 – 1 DISK). That thick hormone just doesn't know when to stop. Very funny.

☐ **Raging Hormone 3**
(CAT 2130 – 1 DISK). Hormone passes on what he has learnt to his son. What a shame.

☐ **Savings**
(CAT 112 – 1 DISK). The post office savings advert quite a novel end. Funny.

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(CAT 344 – 1 DISK). Some essential add-on command libraries for Amos/Amos Pro.

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(CAT 498 – 1 DISK). A collection of classic old Spectrum games for use with the above emulator program.

☐ **Speccy Classics 2**
(CAT 1499 – 1 DISK). More great games for emulator.

☐ **Speccy Classics 3**
(CAT 2993 – 1 DISK). And yet more corkers.

☐ **The Dark Room**
(CAT 2160 – 1 DISK). This is a very nicely presented information disk for would be David Baileys. A beginners guide.

☐ **Titanic Cheats**
(CAT 1031 – 1 DISK). Absolutely chock a block full of hints, tips and cheats.

☐ **VIC 20 Emulator**
(CAT 1087 – 1 DISK). Turn your Amiga into a VIC 20. Comes with tons of games. Needs a fast Amiga to fully appreciate.

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(CAT 1855 – 1 DISK). This is a pretty technically impressive demo to show off your nice Amiga to your mates.

☐ **Friday at Eight**
(CAT 2033 – 1 DISK). A very fast paced demo with a really brilliant music track.

☐ **Full Moon**
(CAT 1740 – 1 DISK). A brilliant demo with a spooky intro and a good pacey tune.

☐ **Love**
(CAT 898 – 2 DISKS). What a lovely demo this one is. Nicey nice and pretty cool.

☐ **Maximum Overdrive**
(CAT 2986 – 2 DISKS). A very long full motion video demo which lasts ages.

☐ **Megaball AGA**
(CAT 842 – 1 DISK). The most popular breakout type game gets even nicer. A must.

☐ **Real**
(CAT 2379 – 1 DISK). Possibly the best AGA demo to date. Totally awesome.

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# What's on the menu




*Paul Overaa tackles the next stage of his example utility by adding some menu and message handling code...*

There's an amazing amount to get through this month and we kick off with the Gadtools approach to menu creation. Gadtool menu definitions are based on sets of data blocks called NewMenu structures that, to the 680x0 coder, looks like this:

```
STRUCTURE   NewMenu,0
UBYTE       gnm_Type
UBYTE       gnm_Pad
APTR        gnm_Label
APTR        gnm_CommKey
UWORD       gnm_Flags
LONG        gnm_MutualExclude
APTR        gnm_UserData
LABEL       gnm_SIZEOF
```

I know these pseudo structure units seem a bit frightening but don't panic – we will not be using most of the fields and I'll be restricting my explanations just to the fields of interest.

The gnm_Type field is used to specify a menu title, a menu item, or a dummy 'end of menu' value. Standard definitions are:

```
NM_TITLE    EQU     1
NM_ITEM     EQU     2
NM_END      EQU     0
```

The gnm_Pad field is always zero – it's just there to ensure that the next field is word aligned). The only other fields you need to worry about are the gnm_Label and gnm_CommKey fields, which are pointers to text strings giving a name and a keyboard shortcut for the menu item.

The menu I'll be using is very simple. It's just a PROJECT menu with two entries: "Select File...," and "Quit To Workbench" and all we do to set up the NewMenu structures is define some data statements to represent the menu title, the two items, and a terminal end entry.

Take a good look at listing 1 and compare my field definitions to those given in the NewMenu definition – all should become clear in a relatively short space of time.

Notice incidentally that the structure holds pointers to strings – that's why I've defined the strings using separate dc.b pseudo-op statements and placed the corresponding labels into the NewMenu definitions.

```
menu        dc.b    NM_TITLE,0
            dc.l    menu_title,NULL
            dc.w    0
            dc.l    0,NULL

            dc.b    NM_ITEM,0
            dc.l    item0,commkey0
            dc.w    0
            dc.l    0,NULL

            dc.b    NM_ITEM,0
            dc.l    item1,commkey1
            dc.w    0
            dc.l    0,NULL
            dc.b    NM_END,0
            dc.l    NULL,NULL
            dc.w    0
            dc.l    0,NULL

menu_title  dc.b 'PROJECT',NULL
item0       dc.b 'Select File...',NULL
commkey0    dc.b 'S',NULL
item1       dc.b 'Quit to Workbench!',NULL
commkey1    dc.b 'Q',NULL
```

***Listing 1: A 680x0 gadtools menu definition***

Attaching a menu to a window is not easy because several steps have to be performed. Firstly, we have to make a call to the Gadtools GetVisualInfoA() routine and on exit a corresponding FreeVisualInfo() function has to be executed.

Secondly, a CreateMenusA() routine must be executed. This too must be coupled with a FreeMenus() function before the program terminates.

Thirdly, a call to LayoutMenusA() must be made. This needs to be checked for success but there is no corresponding de-allocation routine to be performed in this case.

Finally, the menu can be installed using the Intuition SetMenuStrip() function and here the function must be coupled with a ClearMenuStrip() call prior to the program terminating.

## ROUTINES

So, we've got a whole load of routines, any or all of which could conceivably fail as we try to attach our menu. If an error did occur, we would have to ensure that only those routines that had been successful get their equivalent de-allocation routines executed.

Now you'll know from last month how I'm handling this problem. Each task that has to be performed is being written as a sub-routine pair that contain the initial setting-up/allocation code, and the corresponding closedown/de-allocation code.

Whenever a routine is successful the de-allocation routine address gets pushed onto a de-allocation stack. Listing 2 contains one set of the new routines – you'll find all the others in the cover disk source code.

Study these arrangements well because they form a coding pattern that I'll be using extensively in this series.

We preserve some registers, set up and make the required function call, check for any errors and then either return an error indicator or push the address of the close-

```
GetVisInfo  movem.l  a0-a1/d0-d1,-(a7)        preserve regs
            movea.l  workbench_p,a0
            movea.w  #TAG_END,a1 no tags
            CALLSYS  GetVisualInfoA, GadToolsBase
            move.l   d0,visual_info_p         save returned pointer
            beq.s    .error
            move.l   #FreeVisInfo,-(a5)       push deallocation routine address
.error      movem.l  (a7)+,a0-a1/d0-d1        restore regs
            rts

FreeVisInfo movem.l  a0-a1/d0-d1,-(a7)        preserve regs
            movea.l  visual_info_p,a0
            CALLSYS  FreeVisualInfo,_GadToolsBase
            movem.l  (a7)+,a0-a1/d0-d1        restore regs
            rts
```

***Listing 2: It's important to grasp the underlying plan of my de-allocation technique!***

```
; Function name:        MenuHandler()
; Purpose:              Handle window's menu events
; Input Parameters:     Address of IDCMP user-port should be in a2.
; Output parameters:    None
; Register Usage:       a0: Used by WaitPort() and GetMsg()
;                       a1: Used by ReplyMsg()
;                       a2: Holds user-port address
;                       d0: Used by WaitPort() and GetMsg()
;                       d1: Unused but possibly altered by system functions
;                       d2: Used as an exit flag (quit when non-zero)
;                       d3: Used to hold message class field
;                       d4: Used to hold message code field
; Other Notes:          All registers are preserved

MenuHandler     movem.l   d0-d4/a0-a2,-(a7)       preserve registers
                clr.l     d2            clear exit flag
MenuHandler2    movea.l   a2,a0         port address
                CALLSYS   WaitPort,_AbsExecBase
                jsr       GetMessage
                cmpi.l    #TRUE,d2      exit flag set?
                bne.s     MenuHandler2
                movem.l   (a7)+,d0-d4/a0-a2       restore registers
                rts                     logical end of routine

GetMessage      movea.l   a2,a0         get port address in a0
                CALLSYS   GetMsg,_AbsExecBase     get the message
                tst.l     d0
                beq.s     GetMessageExit          did it exist?
                move.l    d0,a1         copy pointer to a1
                move.l    im_Class(a1),d3         copy message class
                move.w    im_Code(a1),d4          copy message code
                CALLSYS   ReplyMsg,_AbsExecBase   then send message
back

                cmpi.l    #IDCMP_MENUPICK,d3      check message
class
                bne.s     GetMessage  skip all non-menu messages
                cmpi.w    #MENUNULL,d4
                beq.s     GetMessage  also skip if MENUNULL

                lsr.w     #5,d4         extract menu item number
                andi.b    #$3F,d4       (will be either 0 or 1)
                beq.s     GetFile
                moveq     #TRUE,d2      set QUIT signal to exit rou-
tine
                bra.s     GetMessage

GetFile         jsr       FileHandler
                bra.s     GetMessage  check for more messages!
GetMessageExit  rts                   d2 holds exit flag
```

***Listing 3: The message handler routine***

```
FileHandler         movem.l    d0-d4/a0-a2,-(a7)       preserve some registers
        ; notice how I've included a call to this dummy
        ; routine at present. This allows me to structure
        ; the GetMessage() code even though the file handler
        ; does not (yet) exist!

                    movem.l    (a7)+,d0-d4/a0-a2       restore some registers

                    rts
```

***Listing 4: A useful dummy 'Display File' event handler!***

down routine onto the de-allocation stack.

The message system used on the Amiga is, at the grass roots level, an Exec facility. Information can be sent from one task to another by creating a data packet known as a Message structure and then transmitting it (sending it) to its destination.

Messages pass between tasks using another Exec defined structure called an MsgPort, more commonly called a "message port" or just a "port."

Ports are basically software entities whose job, among other things, is to act as a receiving station for messages.

Before a program can receive a message it must have allocated and initialised a suitable message port and the good news here, as far as our program is concerned, is that Intuition will have automatically set up the required port (called a 'User Port') automatically.

Gadtools-created menus are quite easy to handle because the messages sent to the window's user port are just conventional IntuiMessages.

As with all Exec messages, the real message data is always provided as a message structure extension and, in the case of IntuiMessages, the data packet ends up looking like this:

```
STRUCTURE IntuiMessage,0

            STRUCT      im_ExecMessage,MN_SIZE
```
(basic message structure. Subsequent fields are the extensions that provide the real data)
```
            LONG        im_Class
            WORD        im_Code
            WORD        im_Qualifier
            APTR        im_IAddress
            WORD        im_MouseX
WORD                    im_MouseY
            LONG        im_Seconds
            APTR        im_IDCMPWindow
            APTR        im_SpecialLink
LABEL   im_SIZEOF
```

**For other examples of function utilities relating to the listings given here, see the Assembler file on this month's cover disk which also contains the usual Assembler code.**

With only one port to look at there is a simple function, called WaitPort(), available for use and we use it to wait for the window's user port to become non-empty, then collect and examine any messages that have arrived.

Listing 3 shows a simple menu event handler that performs this task, and you'll see that message class and code values are used to decide whether we have a menu event and, if so, whether the code value indicates that the message should be ignored or not.

If you trace through the code you'll see that the only messages of interest are MENUPICK messages, whose item code corresponds to either menu event 0 (select a file) or menu event 1 (quit to Workbench).

Function definition box-outs are now beginning to encroach on the space I should be using for explanations, so this month, although I've included a few box-outs (see CoverDisk) for the menu related functions you are expected to get the usual details from the source code.

You'll notice that the delay loop from last month's code has been removed because the window will now stay open until the "quit to Workbench" menu option is selected (this option causes the menu handler routine to return so that the code execution falls through to the closedown code).

On the Devpac specific front incidentally you should notice that I am now beginning to make quite a lot of use of local labels beginning with a period.

If you hit snags with a non-Devpac assembler you'll need to get hold of part two for details of alternative conventions. Anyway that's it for this issue.

● Next month we tackle some ASL file requester issues so until then, may all your coding problems be little ones.

## Collecting the pieces together

Once the various routines had been coded it was just a matter of getting them executed and, for simplicity, this sort of code was chosen:

```
            jsr       LockScreen
            beq.s     closedown
            jsr       GetVisInfo
            beq.s     closedown
            jsr       OpenWindow
            beq.s     closedown
            jsr       CreateMenu
            beq.s     closedown
            jsr       LayoutMenu
            beq.s     closedown
            jsr       InstallMenu
            beq.s     closedown
```

The closedown routine discussed last month does of course handle all the new error/non-error closedown operations automatically although, as far as calling the above routines is concerned, I ought to mention that there is a rather more elegant list/loop based approach that can be used instead.

At the moment however, so you can see the various stages as explicit steps, I'll continue making a linear series of sub-routine calls. By the time the above routines have executed without error the menu will be set up and active – so we can call the event handler by loading an address register with the address of the window, locating the user port address, and passing that value to the menu handler routine like this:

```
movea.l window_p,a1
movea.l wd_UserPort(a1),a2        user port address
jsr     MenuHandler handle user actions
```

Notice incidentally that I've used a dummy call to a file handling routine in this month's code. The reason should be pretty obvious but I'll have more to say about the menu handler next month. For now here are some final notes to help with this month's code:

Firstly, you'll be able to assemble the code using the same approach as with the first two installments because, at the moment, I'm continuing to use standard Amiga system definitions but placing equivalent definitions within the source rather than using the official include files.

This means the program can be assembled with any assembler – even if you haven't got the official includes!

# public sector



*Dave Cusick is practically skint, so there's no better man to pick out this month's most outstanding public domain, shareware and licenseware releases*

Once there lived a man who owned a goat, upon which he did lavish much attention. He would saunter down to the shops of a weekend and invest in many extravagant gifts to shower upon it, intending to make it stronger and healthier.

Meanwhile his poor neighbour, who also owned a goat, had precious little money to fritter away on frivolous fancies, so had to content himself with cheaper alternatives. Despite this, his goat grew up to be equally strong and healthy.

Then one day, the first man got a message from his bank saying he was two thousand pounds overdrawn and a nice man would be coming around to repossess his goat. And yea verily his neighbour did chuckle for three whole days and nights.

And believe it or not, Amigas can be a bit like goats. In some ways. Maybe.

## Quingo

**Programmed by: Mat Fascione**
Available from: Magnetic Fields
Disk No. GA196

There are some people who have a natural knack for doing incredibly well on those pub quiz arcade machines, standing in front of the thing for hours, pumping in streams of ten-pence pieces, racking up huge scores and often watching piles of coins build up in the winnings tray.

The rest of the population lack any kind of ability in the obscure trivia department but nevertheless love participating, as is evident by the outstanding success of that most banal of board games, Trivial Pursuits.




***Prepare to say "Blimey, I don't know that" quite a lot – it's Quingo***

If you can't stand collecting pieces of pie but still yearn for the challenge inherent in plucking long forgotten dross out of the dark depths of your mind, then Quingo is the ideal solution.

It combines often horrendously taxing multiple choice quiz questions with a scoring system borrowed from bingo, to produce an interesting, if freqently frustrating end product.

What was on the B-side of the Strangler's "Peaches"? Which geological period first saw the reptiles as dominant species? These are the sort of brain-bending teasers you will have to contend with.

However, since it is impossible to transfer winnings into usable credits, many will find it practically impossible to win more than a couple of quid.

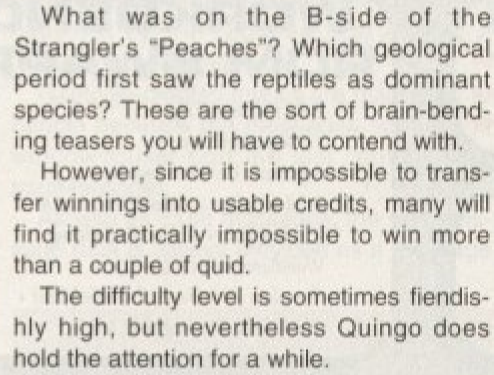
The difficulty level is sometimes fiendishly high, but nevertheless Quingo does hold the attention for a while.

## Please Release Me

**Programmed by: Iain B McCaffrey**
Available from: NBS
Disk No. P159

Worthy of a mention, if only because it raised a fair bit of interest when first played, this extremely short animation cannot really be described without giving the whole joke away.

You'll need a 2Mb machine to run it, for some reason. Once it has eventually loaded, there's a nice sample of the eponymous country tune and a well drawn animation which lasts a matter of seconds – and that's about it, really.



***(Very) small but perfectly formed, Please Release Me is something of a bizarre animation***

Still, it's quite amusing the first couple of times and for that reason alone it might be worth a look.

## Wire Chaos

**Produced by: Skull Army Software**
Available from: David J Cruickshank

Disney may have had a box-office flop on their hands when they came up with cult sci-fi classic Tron, but they were unwittingly inspiring hordes of programmers when they dreamt up the infamous light cycles game.

Unfortunately, there have been very few decent computer versions of this, and admittedly I feared the worst on slipping this particular disk into the drive.

I need not have been concerned, however, since Wire Chaos is a polished and professional game which boasts a whole host of challenging and enjoyable features.

It also offers the chance to involve up to five players in the PD demo version and six in the registered shareware version, and as such joins the ranks of multi-player classics, where it finds itself in

## Operation Firestorm

**Programmed by: Phil Ruston**
Available from: Amiganuts PD
Disk No. LW26

Remember Green Beret? It was the ultimate 8-bit walky-shooty game, and while the gameplay wasn't exactly mentally demanding, it provided amusement for, well, maybe a couple of minutes.

For the uninitiated, in a walky-shooty game you take control of some fellow who's either incredibly brave or incredibly stupid – or more likely both.

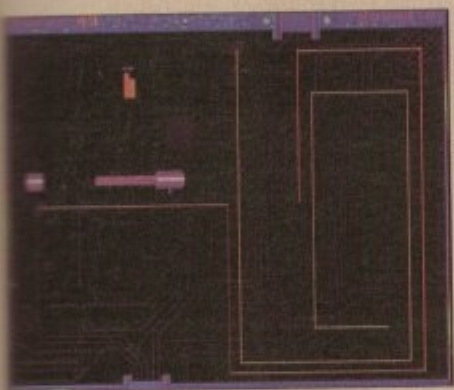
He wanders from left to right brandishing a large weapon of some description, which he uses to ensure that every other moving sprite on the screen is removed.

At the same time he occasionally makes the effort to dodge enemy fire, because if he takes one too many hits he'll explode. The emphasis, the astute observer will notice, was not particularly on realism.

The cynical might ask, why bother resurrecting such a tedious genre of game? Well, commercial games producer ICE tried it with Fireforce a couple of years ago and it wasn't actually too bad.

I suppose this version could be a lot worse. It's well presented with reasonable graphics and adequate sound, although the aging coin-op style wibbly music quickly gets irritating.

There are bonus weapons to be picked

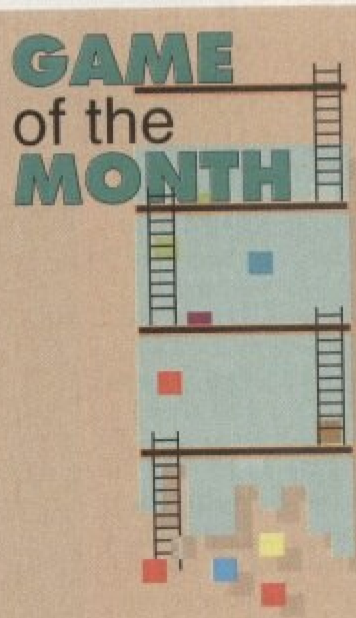


It may not be much to look at, but get a few friends around and Wire Chaos is excellent fun

good company mingling with the likes of four-player Dogfight.

An impressive array of options include the facility to add up to 60 computer-controlled Wall Hoggers, or to tailor the speed to suit your ability, or even to compete in challenging maze sections.

Stylish touches such as the sound effects, which appear to have been sampled from the film, add considerably to

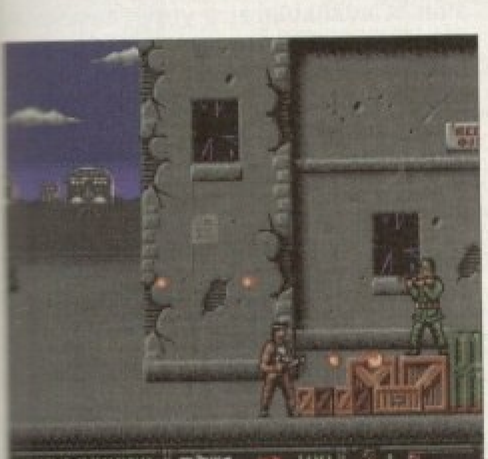



the game. Playability is present in copious amounts, and a good many hours could be spent crowded around the keyboard with a bunch of partially inebriated companions revelling in the addictive action.

## Calling all PD libraries....

....and individuals with anything remotely worth my while having a peek at. If you want something released as PD, or you're a library with stacks of hot new stuff that you haven't seen reviewed yet, why not drop me a line with a copy, full documentation and everything clearly labelled? I promise I'll at least look at your work.

*Tina Hackett, PD Submissions, Amiga Computing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.*



Gunny-gunny action with Operation Firestorm, a blast from the past that might tickle Green Beret fans' fancies

up, with which the enemy ranks can be more easily decimated.

Fanatical fans of the genre will enjoy it, although it's not really my cup of tea.

## Ask Me Another

**Programmed by: Gina Mears**
Available from: F1 Licenceware

There are a wealth of educational programs knocking about in the public domain, but Ask Me Another is especially well presented if not awe-inspiringly original.

A selection of games are available, ranging from telling the time to completing words, and common to them all is the simple interface.

The questions are displayed in the top-left section of the screen, with possible answers listed on the right. Each answer is given a number, and the user clicks on one of ten little buttons in the bottom-left corner to enter the answer.

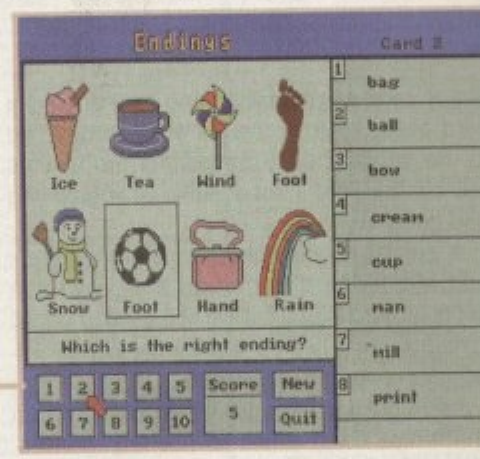
Instructions can be displayed on screen from the main menu, and there are two "packs of cards" each with ten different games included.

The difficulty level ranges from pretty low to relatively high on some stages, although not frustratingly so.

Correct answers are rewarded with praise from the infamous Amiga "voice" and incorrect ones are met with a "Try again" message. Get a question wrong the first time and another go is granted before the computer moves on to the next one.

Unfortunately, if it's wrong the second time the program does not point out the correct answer, which seems a little strange for a piece of educational software.

Despite this, Ask Me Another is still an interesting program and if you can afford




Impressive educational title Ask Me Another proceeds to do just that

the time to supervise the child's use of it, then there is no reason why it should not prove a rewarding and beneficial activity.

## Strike

**Programmed by: Simon Camilleri**
Available from: Bus Stop Licenceware

Ten pen bowling is an unlikely yet surprisingly good subject for a computer game, and Strike proves to be not only well designed but also quite playable.

## Artistix

**Programmed by: Andrew Campbell**
Available from: Bus Stop Licenceware

One of the most powerful and fun to use art packages to have appeared for a considerable time comes in the shape of this shareware production aimed squarely at younger users.

A whole host of bizarre drawing tools enable the on-screen imitation of all manner of primary school-style artwork. Unique tools such as runny jam (which drips if the pointer is held still for too long) and messy comb are present and are great fun to use.

Other features include a selection of flower and plant parts which can simply be stamped on, and in the full registered version a selection of built-in pictures is included. Standard load and save options are of course present.

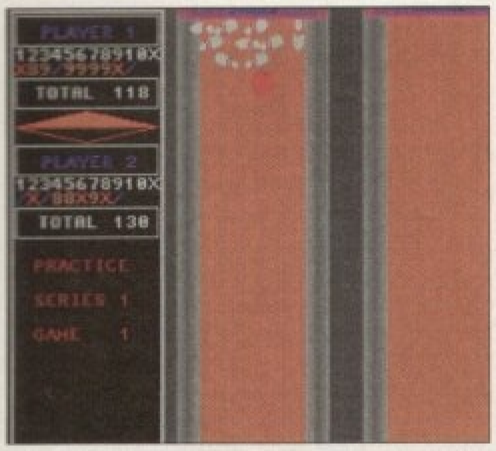
Silly sounds accompany most actions and these further add to the appeal of the product to children. However, it isn't missing any of the features you would expect to find in a traditional art package and




Unleash the artistic – or destructive – potential of a nearby child with Artistix

when combined with some of the more wacky effects, quite impressive pictures can be created.

It's the ideal mess-free way to let a young child experiment artistically. The only problem may be prising them away from your precious Amiga afterwards.




*All the fun without those annoying shoes which never fit properly – and that ball's on target for a Strike*

Graphically it is simplistic and only around a third of the main screen is actually devoted to the action, but to be honest the visuals are not important since Strike is engrossing and good fun to play.

A smattering of sampled sound effects add atmosphere, although it would have been nice to have had a noise for the ball rolling up the alley as well as the actual collisions between ball and pins.

As might be expected, two players can challenge each other to friendly games. However, for once there is also a single player tournament mode which adds a degree of longevity.

In this the player tries to make it through six international events which are nothing if not challenging. Each tournament has six knockout rounds – even the first of which is pretty demanding.

Bowling is achieved by a couple of timely clicks on the fire button and nothing more, but there is still much skill involved in ensuring good scores are consistently obtained.

Those who are somewhat inept at real ten-pin bowling will be pleased to learn that complete misses, where the ball trundles lazily along the gutter, are extremely rare.

However, scoring strikes regularly requires practice and up against computer competition beginners will find the going tough at first.

All in all, Strike is a high quality piece of licenceware which is definitely worth the asking price.

## Droptool

**Programmed by: Charles Parker**
Available from: Charles Parker

The problem with the increasing number of programs which support AppIcons for dropping files onto, is that once a few of them are installed the workbench can start to get quite cluttered.

A program called Dropbox appeared to offer the perfect answer, being able to display documents, decompress archives and so on whenever a file was dropped on it, but unfortunately those of us with Kickstart 3 machines found that strange things started happening to its preferences file on an alarmingly regular basis.

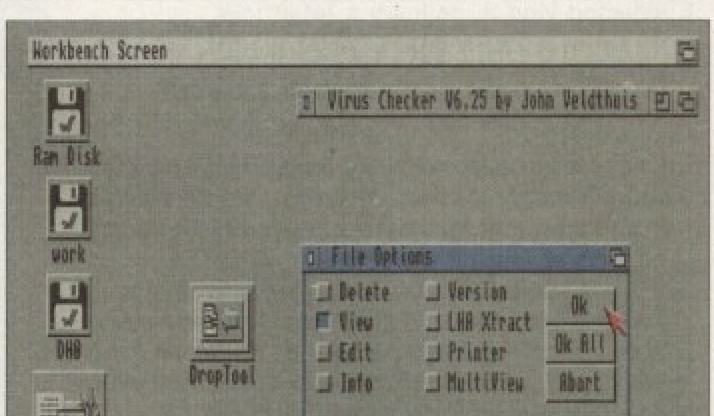
Droptool, which incidentally is in no way related to Dropbox, does not have the advantage of automatically being able to decide what to do with a file – you have to tell it by clicking on one of eight options.

However, it completely blows away Dropbox in terms of reliability, since I have so far experienced no difficulties whatsoever in using it.

Using Droptool, files can be passed to another program for viewing or editing, or to the printer so that a hard copy can be obtained.

Alternatively, information about the icon or the version number can be displayed, .lha archives can be extracted to RAM:, and Multiview can be called.

This latter feature is especially welcome because, since Droptool can unpack Powerpacked files, Multiview can now be used to display packed documents.




*Don't overcrowd your workbench. Instead try getting hold of Droptool, a one-for-all AppIcon*

At the time of writing, only the AGA version is available at a very reasonable shareware fee. However, a non-AGA release is imminent. If you liked the idea of Dropbox but were annoyed by the constant problems, then the answer to your prayers may well be Droptool.

## Love AGA

**Produced by: Fairlight**
Available from: Club 1200
Disk Nos. AED066/AED067

Hardly original but fairly well done, Love AGA is a demo featuring everything you'd expect – a couple of rotating 3D shapes, the odd well-drawn if unimaginative still picture, and music that fortunately breaks the mould and abandons the usual techno fare.

Among the more impressive bits are a few nicely shaded objects spinning about in front of subtly shaded backgrounds, and a "phong twist" effect with a distorted cube rotating strangely.

Unfortunately there's also a selection of flying dots attempting to make yet more spinning shapes, although a nice colourful line-changing effect and a zooming mandlebrot set arrive just in time to prevent the user reaching out to reset.

The bizarre and slightly sick Marilyn Monroe picture illustrated is one of the other more notable bits, and the end credits scroll over an impressive rendered – and rotating, funnily enough – Fairlight logo. However, the whole demo still seems to lack any real individuality or flair, and well programmed though it may be, it is hard to see it being booted more than two or three times before being consigned permanently to the disk box.



*Much more constructive than cracking and pirating software, but Fairlight's Love AGA demo still made me feel a strange sense of déjà vu*

## lay your hands on me

**David J Cruickshank**
58 Aln Street, Hebburn, Tyne & Wear
NE31 1XT

**Magnetic Fields**
PO Box 118, Preston, Lancashire
PR2 2AW

**NBS**
1 Chain Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight
PO30 5QA
Tel: 0983 529594

**Amiganuts PD**
3 Spring Road, Bitterne, Southampton
SO19 2BH

**F1 Licenceware**
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E104 DESK TOP GUIDE TO MUSIC (3 disks) Massive tutorial guide to making music, recommended
E107 TRUMPTY FIREWORK ALPHABET Very entertaining way to teach your child the alphabet, fully animated
E109 MR MEN OLYMPIC (2 disks) large Mr Men characters as the stars even for this Olympic. Recommended
E110 CULT TV DATABASE (2 disks) info on early TV films
E115 ELECTRONIC WORLDS (3 disks) new K. James bibles
E116 HOW THE EARTH BEGAN Info on the Big Bang
E117 PAINT BOX DEMO kid's paint program
E118 WORKBENCH 2 Tutorial (user guide)
E119 DINO WAR Quiz on dinosaurs
E120 JUNIOR MATHS with very colourful graphics
E121 PICTURE PUZZLE Fancy a game of JIGSAW
E122 WORD FACTORY Brilliant, spelling type games
E123 KID DISK 1 best education program includes COLOUR THE ALPHABET 2, Paint etc.
E124 KID DISK 2 more high quality education
E125 JURASSIC PARK must for all dinosaur fans
E126 CHILDREN'S SONGS 2 - 5 excellent children's songs
E127 MING SHU (A500 only) Chinese Astrology
E128 ASTRO 22 PRO V3 latest astrology program
E129 KID DISK 3 (DTP) (follow up Kid Disk 1 & 2)
E130 FRENCH VERB TESTER - helps you with French
E131 CULT TV DATABASE II (2 DISKS)
E132 PHOTOGRAPHY - the Darkroom Brilliant demonstration, how to develop (photo) film. Recommended

More education software in catalogue disk

## 18+ DEMOS

| | |
|---|---|
| 0001 +Shovering Girl 5 (A) | 0030 +Mega Maid* (A) |
| 0003 +Bodytalk (2) (A) | 0031 +Calendar Girls (A) |
| 0006 +Viz Calendar 1990 (A) | 0032 +Mayfair (A) |
| 0007 +NIGHTBREED (A) | 0033 +Utopia (A) |
| 0009 +Marie Whittaker (A) | 0045 +Girls of Sport (A) |
| 0024 +Sabrina Special (A) | 0049 +Page 3 Girl (A) |
| 0025 +Ole Filkinger (A) | 0070 +Sun Eon Girls (A) |
| 0026 +Madonna Early Days | 0071 +Tina Small (A) |
| 0028 Kathy Lloyd* | |

## DEMOS

D011 MULTITASKING Demo of what is multitasking
D016 DEAD DANCE THRASH good dance music based demo
D050 PINK FLOYD THE WALL (6 disks) Massive music & demo lasts a long time (requires 2 disk drives)
D091 STAR WARS DEMO (2 disks and A500 only) Super starwar demo, lots of X wing anim
D107 ODDYSEE (5 disk & A500 only) Incredible 40 minute space epic journey movies. Recommended
D118 STAR TREK MEGA DEMO A (A500, A1200)
D120 1911 VOYAGE Brilliant demo lot of fill vector
D152 THE ELECTRIC TOUCH Multi scroll vector etc
D174 ACID MIX 5 brilliant acid track
D261 FONTIER Incredible Elite 2 demo animation
D251 MANGA WORLD Brilliant manga slideshow
D252 JAPANESE LANG Learn how to speak Japanese
D253 SUNTEAM GG ESWAT Eswat games
D254 AKIRA DEMO Akira Manga demo
D255 TROOP JUGERNORT 1 Story & games
D256 MANGA WORLD 2 More Manga slide show
D257 SUNTEAM QUIZ Quiz
D258 MAKE IT SO EASY Guess

**100 DEMOS PACK**
NEW just released brand new collection of 100 demos. Must for all DEMO lovers, destined to be No. 1 seller, ONLY £8.00
SUITABLE FOR ANY AMIGA

## A1200 ONLY

AGA001 EXTENSION DEMO Stunning demo with fast landscape anim and a rotating city, receive 90% in CU
AGA002 FRACTAL GENERATOR(NEW) Create stunning fractal in 256 colour
AGA003 WORKBENCH HACK Load of hack/toy/blanker etc
AGA006 NEW SUPERKILLER Know & kill 316 types of virus, well recommended
AGA007 MINDWARP one of the very first demo for the A1200
AGA011 SLEEPLESS NIGHT 3
AGA012 PLANET GROOVE release by Team Hoi
AGA013 MOTOR INVADER 2 (2 Disks) Very playable INVADER clone set. Recommended
AGA015 POINT OF SCALE Stunning vector demo came direct from France
AGA016 CHROMA good demo
AGA017 WORLD OF MANGA AGA (4 disks) Load of cute Manga chic slide show in stunning 256 colours
AGA021 MAGIC WORKBENCH Improve the look & add extra command to your Workbench (HD required)
AGA023 U-CHESS the best chess program so far, stunning graphic but requires 4 megabytes
AGA024 WORKBENCH 3 SCREEN Great back drop for A1200 (not for beginners)
AGA41 GIF BEAUTIES VOL 1-10 Available each disk auto boot & contain loads of stunning pics of raunchy women. Note fully compatible with any Amiga
AGA062 BODY SHOP VOL 1-7 Available (2 disks each) See description above (A1200 only) & order with volume number 1 to 7 (2 disks per volume)
AGA080 FIT CHICK VOL 1-5 Available (2 disks each) see description above (A1200 only)
AGA90 ASSASSIN FIX DISK 1 brilliant collection of degrade utilities for running non compatible software, we recommended you get this 2 disk now
AGA91 ASSASSIN FIX DISK 2 (new) latest contained more degrade utility (see above) Recommended
AGA94 RELOKIT V1.4 latest, run A500 SOFTWARE
AGA97 A1200 UTIL - AGA TESTER, SYSINFO etc.
AGA98 ACTION REPLAY V4 Complete ACTION REPLAY on disk
AGA99 MADFIGHTER 2 brilliant street fighter clones
AGA100 AGA BLITZ SCREEN BLANKER
AGA101 FAST GIFF 2 display GIFF pic in Workbench
AGA102 AGA DIAGNOSTIC - NEW system tester
AGA103 BLACK BOARD AGA decent image processor
AGA104 REND 24 Similar to above
AGA105 QUICK GRAB AGA - can grab AGA screen
AGA110 WORLD BEYOND 1 (3) stunning 250 COLOUR fantasy art, leaves Atari users breathless
AGA114 SMELL LIKE CHANEL NO 5 brilliant demo
AGA121 MAGIC FACTORY (1-5) STAR TREK stunning 256 colour raytrace startreks, brilliant
AGA133 AGA UTIL v1 AGA util compilation
AGA134 AGA UTIL v2 more AGA util compilation
AGA135 AGA UTIL v3 more of the above
AGA136 AGA UTIL v4 even more of above
AGA137 IMAGE PROCESSOR IFF picture processor
AGA138 MULTIBOOT - 4 various versions A500 EMU
AGA139 WB3 HARD DISK PREF & INSTALLER installing WB3/prefect the hard disk
AGA140 CROSS DOS PLUS v5.1 read/write PC files
SEE GAMES, UTIL ETC. FOR MORE A1200 SOFTWARE

## ANIMATIONS

A013 SPACE PROBE search for alien lifeform
A022 LUXO TEENAGERS Incredible ray trace animation
A072 LIFE A BITCH (18+) We all know life's a bitch
A179 THE LIVING WORLD SLIDESHOW
A187 PERIL OF THE DEEP (2 disks) Incredible slideshow of very big sea creatures
A193 NEMESIS COMIC Animate comic set in space
A215 MADONNA 3 (3 disks) Madonna fans, get this, a must!
A231 ALIENS The best Alien slideshow & demo
A293 MANGA COMIC Cute, chic and robot slide
A302 CAT SLIDESHOW For all cat lovers
A336 FAST CAR (Not A1200) & expensive car slide show

## MUSIC

M001 BEASTY BOYS Good, We Want Some Pussy songs
M002 MICHAEL JACKSON Brilliant song of "BAD"
M005 +100 C64 TUNES 100 C64 Games Music
M072 +MADONNA songs from the hanky panky album
M076 POPEYE meet the Beast Boy, very good
M156 +CD PLAYER Simulate a CD player
M160 +I AM TOO SEXY (2 disks) full song
M194 JESUS ON E'S (2 disks) Super music disk
M262 A-Z TUNES (4 disks) hundreds of C64 games music

## NEW

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SPECTRUM +200 GAMES PKS3 ONLY £12.99

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BARGAIN £1 OFF ANY 2 PACK ORDER
attention all Spectrum emulator v1.7 & 50 games (bought from us in the past). Upgrade to the V2+ & 100 games for only £4.99 + return original Spectrum 1.7 pack)

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## NEW TITLES

U746 C64 EMULATOR V3 latest release much improved & Commodore 64 emulator (2 disks)
U744 SID Professional. New release disk utilities
U773 AGA ACTION REPLAY IV PRO New & updated
U781 SNOOP DOS V2 latest release
U782 CITIZEN PRINT MANAGER for Citizen printer
U740 SCREEN BLANKER large collection (excellent)
U789 HD MEMORY v2. Use Hard drive as extra memory
X075 MADONNA SEX (3 disks) 18+ only
X074 ADULT JOKES (18+ ONLY) Hmm
U761 RELOCKIT 1.4 Latest A500 emulator
U726 AREX MANUAL tutor on AREX (WB 2/3) only
U752 EPU STACKER Double the storage space on your HD work on normal disk drive
U750 MUSIC CATALOGUE specially for tape, CD etc.
U748 HOW TO CREATE BOOTABLE DISK tutor
U749 DISK REPAIR 3 12 disk repair/recover util.
U738 S.KICK Professional 3 version of WB 1.3 emu
U751 3D GARDEN DESIGNER design gardens in 3D
U750 MR BACK UP Professional back up HD etc
U784 DMS Professional v2 Compress 2 disks into 1
U783 POOLS WINNER GOLD 1 Pools prediction
E125 JURASSIC PARK more learning aids on dinosaurs
E126 CHILDREN'S SONGS 5 good nursery songs
E129 KID DISK 3 - drawing program for kids
E130 FRENCH VERB TESTER test your French
G667 GOLF (2 DISKS) very playable golf games
G668 AMOS CRICKET 2 new cricket games
G673 BOBBY GARDEN + DIGGER brilliant coin up
AGA121 AMIGA FACTORY (5 DISKS) STAR TREK
U755 SPECTRUM EMULATOR V1.7 Latest (contains 4 versions for each AMIGA system)
U651 SPECTRUM GAMES (8) use with above

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**All packs above come on 5 disks each and are guaranteed. No fonts or clipart images are repeated.*

# SYSTEM

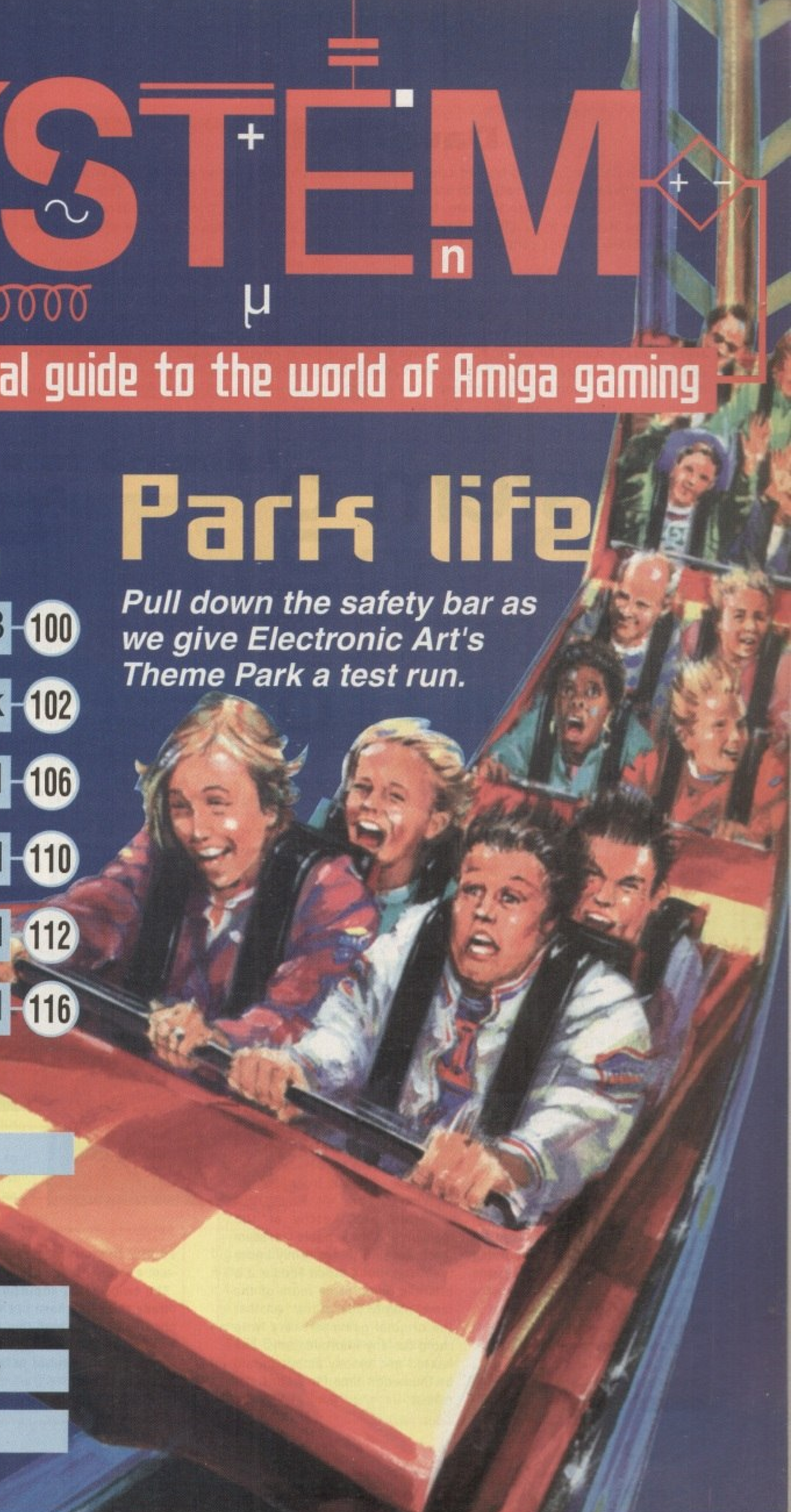
Your essential guide to the world of Amiga gaming

Under the System spotlight this month



## Park life

*Pull down the safety bar as we give Electronic Art's Theme Park a test run.*



## SYSTEM ESSENTIALS



## SYSTEM ANALYSIS

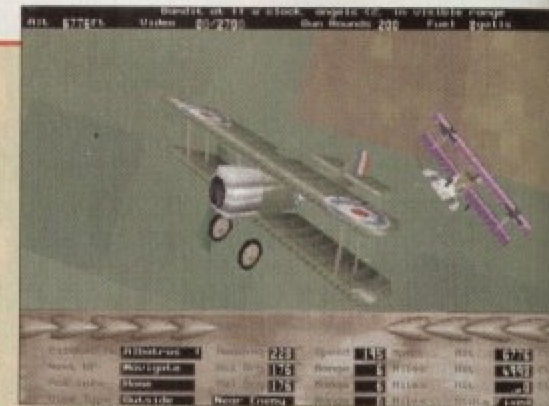
# Dawn Patrol

Empire Software, famous for its brilliant talents in the simulation's department, are back with another one. Dawn Patrol, created by Rowan Software, famous for Reach for the Skies, is a true flight simulation with the emphasis firmly on pilot control and "seat of the pants" skill.

The PC version uses such up-to-date techniques as image mapping layered on a polygonal frame, with light sourcing, gouraud shading and 640 x 400 SVGA resolutions, that the screen looks more realistic than anything you've seen so far on the PC. The Amiga version might not be as graphically fantastic as the PC, but it still promises to raise a few eyebrows. You can choose from 15 period aircraft from World War 1 that will fly just as the originals did. Choice of planes include the Fokker Triplane, Eindecker, Sopwith Camel, SPAD 7, so you can choose which side you want to fly for.

The effects of battle damage are significant and are in accordance with every aerial manoeuvre you make. Bullets rip canvas and chop up the woodwork of the plane, plus bits of the fuselage and wing sections slowly peel away from the aircraft. Likewise, the sound effects are superb and simply add to the authenticity of combat manoeuvres.

It's been a quiet time for flight simulations just



recently, but Dawn Patrol promises to make some bi noises in the Amiga world. You can have a closer loo at Rowan Software's flight sim via a System Previe which will appear in next month's magazine.

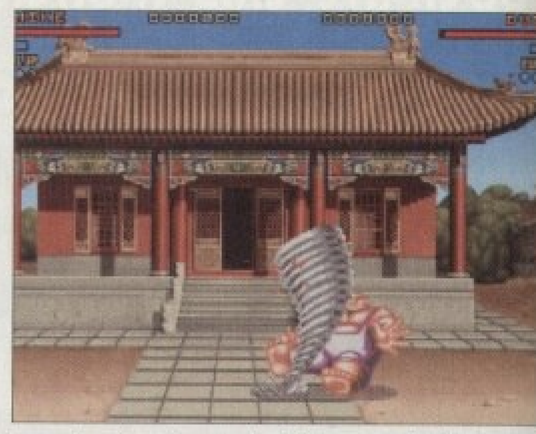
# system online



**Empire take to the skies, all change at Gremlin, more Sensible Fodder, Body Blows Budget Bonanza, plus what's going to be happening at this autumn's ECTS**

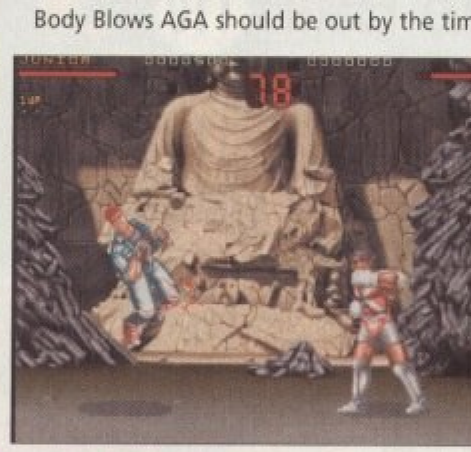
# Another blow for Team 17

Yes, those barmy bargain boys (and girls) from Wakefield are out and about on the budget run once more with the forthcoming release of Body Blows AGA.



This best-selling beat-'em-up features no less than 11 tough combatants, 256 colour graphics, six beautifully drawn background screens, four or eight player tournament, the unique "Tag Team" mode previously only seen in Ultimate Body Blows and it's hard drive installable to boot.

Body Blows AGA should be out by the time your eyes have scanned over this page and it will cost you £14.99. Owners of the original Body Blows can upgrade their game by sending their original Body Blows disks (box and manuals not necessary) with a cheque or Postal Order made payable to Team 17 for £7.99 to: Body Blows Upgrades, Team 17, 6 St John's Square, Wakefield WF1 2QX, England.



# Cannon Fodder 2

It had to happen. Those Sensible Software geezers are proud to present yet another sequel, this time to the amazingly popular and ultra violent Cannon Fodder.

The aptly named Cannon Fodder 2 will feature a whole bundle of new levels featuring more chaos and destruction than you can shake a stick at.

This time around you'll point 'n' click your way around levels from various periods throughout history.

The action will start in and around the modern day Middle East then will progress into a Medieval world with castles and battlements dotted around the place.

The gun-toting arcade fun then leaps to the 1930s and promises to feature gangsters in abundance. Sensible's shoot-'em-up will feature an abundance of new lethal weapons and vehicles, plus the excellent "War's never been so much fun" tune is going to be totally remixed and if Sensible are to be believed, will feature lead vocals from Sensible supremo Jon Hare.

Details are sketchy at the moment and the Sensible lads seem to be keeping things firmly under their hats, but Cannon Fodder 2 is basically going to be more of the same, mainly due to the fact that the original game left very little room for any improvements. The heated and bloody action should be finished in time for a Christmas release.

# It's showtime!

The twice-yearly industry computer trade show will have been and gone by the time you read this, but System will be at the three-day event once again and it promises to be the most exciting one yet.

The big boys are back in town with Nintendo, Sega and Panasonic all in attendance and all with machines on the way. Trade and media focus will be on trade body ELSPA (European Leisure Software Publishers Association) who are expected to unveil a White Paper outlining the





# All change at Gremlin!

Out with the old...

It was ten years ago that a character going by the name of Monty Mole achieved national notoriety on ITV's News at Ten by starring in a computer game with Arthur Scargill.

Little did Monty or Arthur know that the ensuing publicity would help turn this early platform game into the first six-figure seller for a fledgling games company called Gremlin Graphics.

Since those early days of 16K RAM packs, hardly a month went by without a classic game from Gremlin featuring prominently in the software charts.

Monty on the Run, Jack the Nipper, Thing on a Spring, Switchblade, Hero Quest, Lotus, Zool and Premier Manager, to mention but a few, have all helped turn the Sheffield-based software house into one of Europe's premier developers and publishers of computer and console games.

To celebrate the ten years of success, Gremlin have decided to change things around slightly. They will now be known as Gremlin Interactive and will have a new corporate image.

In a bold move designed to reflect the company's confidence in its plans for the next ten years, the famous psychedelic rainbow lozenge is about to be replaced.

Gremlin's Managing Director, Ian Stewart, has this to say on the change: "Of course there will be some sadness to see the old style go, but we do need to reflect the tremendous change in the computer industry. Gremlin never was a Graphics company and there have been times when this has been rather confusing.

"As for the logo we'll miss it, but it was beginning to be a bit like wearing flares and platform shoes in a room full of Doc Martens."

...in with the new

## System Technology

**The world of computers is ever-changing and System is here to keep you aware of what else is happening within the fast-moving computer entertainment industry.**

- **Super Street Fighter 2, one of the biggest games of the year on the MegaDrive, failed to hold its RRP on the first day of its release. The game was discounted by many stores by around £10-£15 and its intended £59.99 RRP and a flat cartridge market has been blamed.**

- **Sony has pulled out of this autumn's ECTS and is going ahead with its own off-site trade event. The firm decided it needed more space to show off the huge catalogue of autumn/winter titles due to hit European shelves via the Sony/Psygnosis publishing axis. Titles on show include Lemmings 3, but the star of the event will be the Sony Playstation, a machine tipped to hit the big-time in 1995.**

- **Thursday 1st September 1994 was the deadline for all computer and video games to have an age suitability rating displayed on the boxes. The new classification system means that all cartridge, disk and CD-ROM titles released by ELSPA members will carry an age sticker. ELSPA believes that by the deadline around 70-80 per cent of all Gallup chart games will display the new classification ratings.**

- **BMG's software division is set to release three titles to coincide with the UK launch of Panasonic's 3DO. The trio of games – Total Eclipse, The Horde and Star Control 2 – are the result of the firm's distribution deal with US games developer Crystal Dynamics and will each retail for £39.99. Further 3DO releases are planned before Christmas, including Off World Interceptor, PaTaank and GEX.**

problems posed by computer pornography, its methods of distribution and recommendations for action by the Government.

Among the highlights of the show will be on Ocean's stand where Shaquille O'Neal is appearing in Shaq Fu, a hot tip for massive software success later on in the year. Virgin Interactive Entertainment will be parading the game of Disney's massive hit movie, The Lion King.

Produced in association with Disney's own animation team, the game looks set to be as beautifully crafted as the film itself.

Multimedia giant Time Warner will be unveiling its interactive division's biggest ever project, Rise of the Robots. It's one of the titles everyone is talking about and people within the industry will be able to get their hands on a final version.

ECTS Event Marketing Manager Minnie McBride, when quizzed about the forthcoming event, offered: "The next generation of gaming hardware has been talked about for years, at the ECTS it finally comes into focus.

"And with all the world's major software publishers also preparing to show their breakthrough products, ECTS will be the place to take a peek into the future of interactive entertainment."

# System Selections

**Looking for a quality game to spend your cash on? Have a look at these selections from the last three months which will help you make that important buying decision.**

## Benefactor

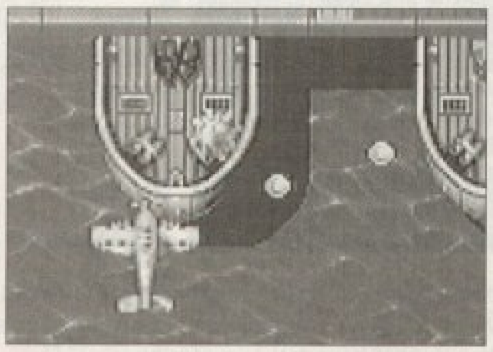
Benefactor is the best thing Psygnosis have released in a long time. It feels like a montage of Flashback and Psygnosis' very own genocidal pets, the Lemmings.

Both the graphics and sound have been implemented very well. The variety of both location and puzzle aspect of Benefactor make it an engrossing challenge.

Benefactor is the type of title that will keep the most dextrous platform freaks and puzzle lovers alike twiddling well into the wee hours.

## Banshee

I do like this game and the weirdest bit it, I've never been a fan of shoot-'em-ups! They usually bore me to bits, but Banshee has that elusive quality that drags you in. Each level demands new challenges which are genuinely demanding, and the learning curve is just right.



This is an intense and extremely satisfying game that should tempt any game's fan with an ounce of adrenaline in their veins. The Harvey Keitel of shoot-'em-ups.

## Quick the Thunder Rabbit

Casting aside all previous platform games, Quik is really a perfectly funky little game. Admittedly, my first reaction to a platform game about rabbits was not printable in a family publication, but I was won over by the sheer professionalism of it all.

It's probably more suited to younger players, due to its simplicity and cuddly approach, but despite every aspect of it screaming "cliché" it comes across as a very fun game.

## King's Quest 6

Adventure fans will be delighted that Sierra have finally decided to release the sixth adventure in the King's Quest series onto the Amiga. As far as adventure games go, they don't get much better than this. With its brilliant graphics, a fairy tale of a plot, superb playability and a level of addiction that will keep you coming back for more and more.



## Pinkie

A cracking little platformer. It looks beautiful with its pastel coloured graphics, it has a nice and cheesy poptastic soundtrack and even the gameplay differs from its competitors as it's heavily puzzle-based. Pinkie, as a concept, isn't anything different and doesn't contain any new surprises, but as a game on its own works remarkably well. Pinkie is a harmless little platformer that won't hurt anybody.

## Universe

Without doubt, Universe is one of the games of the year so far. It has class in copious amounts and is presented outstandingly well. The combined icon and text control system is intuitive and friendly, making this a simple game to get to grips with.

Some of the puzzles encountered are completely mystifying, until suddenly the solution dawns on you and you wonder why on earth you didn't realise what to do a little earlier on. Universe is the type of adventure game that will be enjoyed by even those normally disinterested in the genre, and must be highly recommended.

## The scores on the doors

**Come on regular readers, you must know how it works by now. New readers welcome you to the most exciting part of the magazine, hold on to your hats...**

I'm sure many of you are now familiar with our new scoring system, but for those reading *Amiga Computing* for the first time and those who might have forgotten exactly how it works, here is our guide to the System scoring, err system.

In our opinion, review scores have lost their context as a percentage; some products receiving scores which were only a few percentage short of being the "perfect" game, when in truth they were only marginally above average.

OK, so the scores might seem unnaturally low at first, but that's only because other scoring systems tend to be on the high side and perhaps not as comprehensive or honest as they could be.

In the long run you'll receive a more concise and reader-orientated review that's geared towards the consumer.

0-20 This is given to the lowest of the low

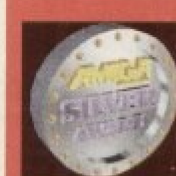
21-30 An all-round poor game that may have a single saving grace

31-40 Just below the average, perhaps let down by a few indiscretions.

41-55 Games of this score are roughly average with 50 being a perfectly average score.

56-66 This is an above average game and is worth buying. For this reason it would be awarded the BRONZE award.



67-77 A game of high quality that you as a reviewer would have no reservation in recommending. Anything of this ilk would be awarded the SILVER award.

78-89 A brilliant title. Definitely worth buying and almost the definitive of its kind. This type of game would receive the GOLD award.




90-100 The best in its genre. This benchmark title receives the PLATINUM title.



# beat the system



The second and final part of System's complete solution to Sierra's superb graphic adventure. Paul Maher guides you through the tricky traps and helps solve those pesky puzzles.

# King's

From the beach go to the crossroads. Use the poem on the nightingale who will in-turn take it to Cassima. Click on the note, then walk to the village and enter the pawn shop.

Use the flute on the shopkeeper to get the tinder box, then leave. Walk back to the beach and use the map to go to the Isle of the Sacred Mountain.

When you arrive at the beach, walk up to the mountain side and click on it. A puzzle will appear. Click on the circles in the corresponding order 4,1,2 and some steps wil then appear. Walk up to the next puzzle, using the manual click on the symbols which represent the letters S, O, A and R.

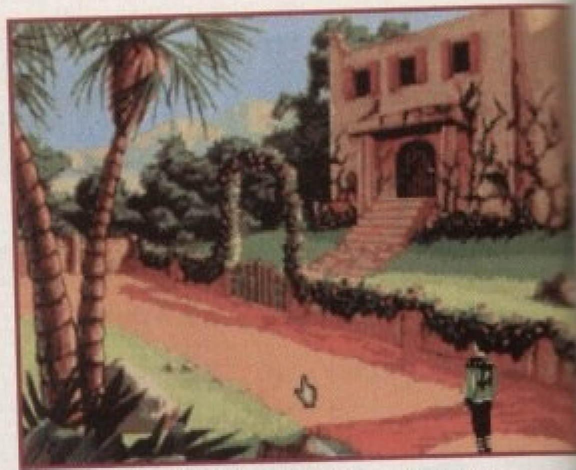
On to the next puzzle and this time you must click on the symbols which are represented by the letters Q, G, O and D. Walk to the top of the cliff and go and pick up some peppermint leaves. Next walk north to the city and get picked up by the guards. You will now meet the Lord and Lady of the city but don't be downhearted when they decide to throw you into the catacombs, this is the right way to go.

You will now have to follow the right directions to get out. First go north, north, east, east and north to get to the skull room; here take a skull. From here walk south, west, west, north and west to get to the spike maze.

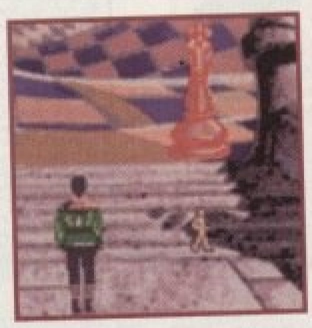
Walk through the spike maze and then go west, and head north to the shield room. Get the shield then walk north, north, north, west and west and you will be at the crypt room.

There will be some coins in a dead man's eyes. Take them then go east, east, south and east. You will end up in a room where the ceiling will come down and crush you. Throws bricks in the gears to stop the ceiling coming down and crushing you. Now walk east, east, east, north and east to a trap door room. Go in the trap door and fall to level two.

You will now have to use your tinder box to light the room. Now walk west, west, west, west, west, south, south and east to find a cul-de-sac room. Use the hole-in-the-wall to look through the wall and you will spot a minotaur. Go west, west, west, south, south, east, south, east, east, north, east, north and north to find the entrance to the liar. Walk over to the pit and use your scarf on the minotaur. You now leave the catacombs and your next move will be to visit oracle. Go and get the sacred water then go back to the beach. Use the map to go to the Isle of the mists.

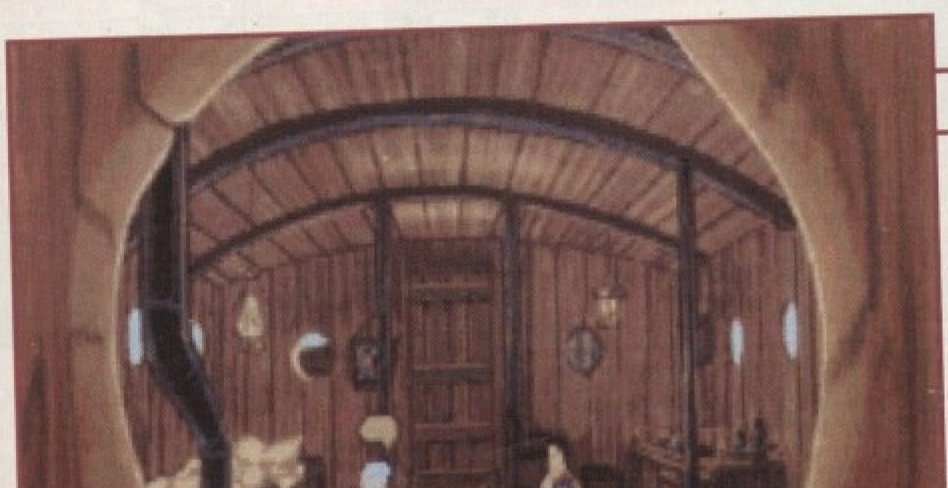


*The Prince stumbles upon a garden of impeccable beauty, but what does it contain within its walls?*

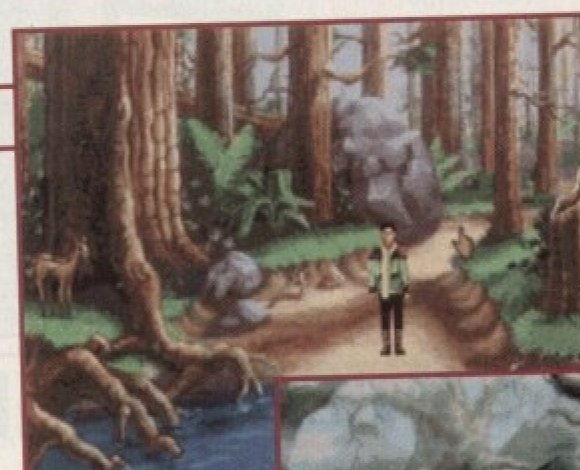


After landing on the beach, head west to the druid woods – take the scythe and the lump of coal. Go back to the beach and go to the Isle of the Beast.

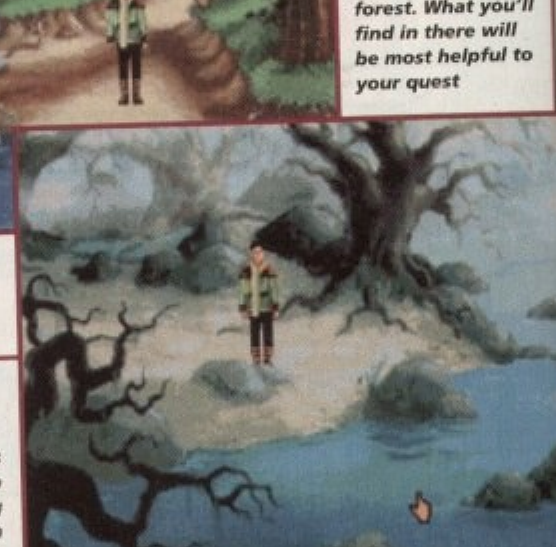
From the beach walk to the stone archer. Use the shield on Prince Alexander to walk past the archer, then pick a white rose from the rose bush. Next use



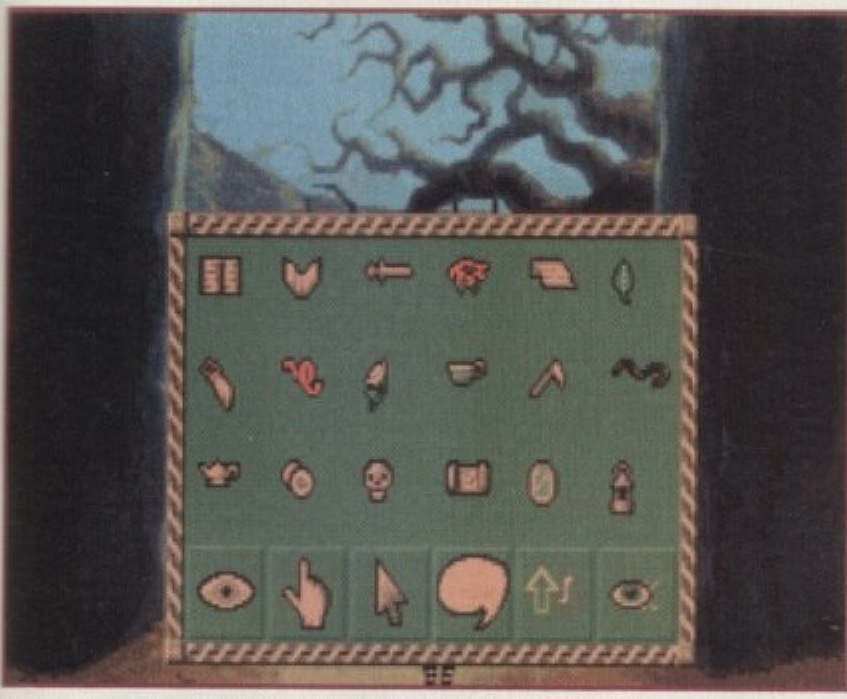
*Make your way to the harbour and have a good sit-down and a chat with the ferryman*



*The Prince, at this point, should head northwards to the forest. What you'll find in there will be most helpful to your quest*



*On the Isle of Mists don't go too close to the water. The strong currents will wash Alexander out to sea, never to return*



Just some of the many items in Prince's inventory. Some are highly important, while others are there just to confuse and distract you



Step through the newly-created enchanted door and you'll gain entrance into the castle

# s Quest 6

## Part 2

the scythe on the rose bush. Wait to receive the ring from the beast. When you have the ring go back to the beach and go to the Isle of the crown.

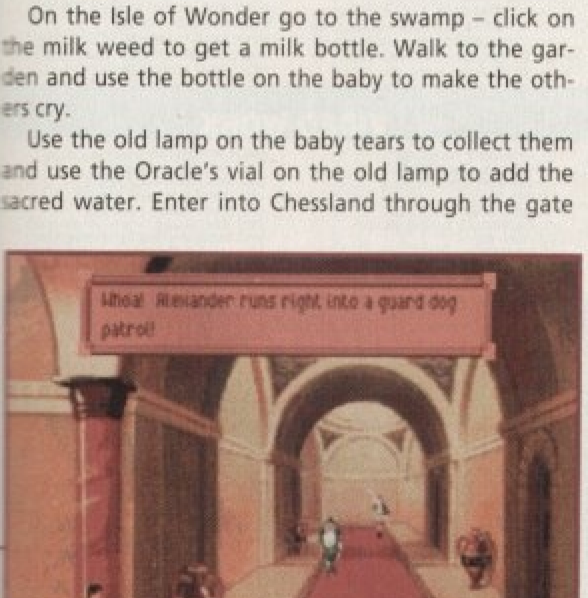
Once on the Isle, go through the village to the garden. Use the rose and the beast's ring on the beauty. Return to the beast's garden on the Isle of the Beast.

In the garden you'll receive a mirror from the beast and clothes from the beauty. Go back to the stone archer and pick another rose, then go back to the book shop on the Isle of the crown. Talk to Jollo, then go to the beach and then the Isle of Wonder.

### CHESSLAND

On the Isle of Wonder go to the swamp – click on the milk weed to get a milk bottle. Walk to the garden and use the bottle on the baby to make the others cry.

Use the old lamp on the baby tears to collect them and use the Oracle's vial on the old lamp to add the sacred water. Enter into Chessland through the gate




The Prince must find his lover, who is inside the castle somewhere, but you'll have to get past those guard dogs first

and watch the two Queens fight.

Use the lump of coal on the Queens. When you get a spoiled egg return to the beach to go to the Isle of the Beast. From the beach go to the beast's garden where you should use the old lamp on the fountain.

Use the spell book on the old lamp and from here go to the Isle of Mists. When you land on the beach watch the bonfire, then do the rain spell.

Use the skull on the bonfire to collect the embers, then return to the Sacred Mountain. Land on the beach and walk up to the logic cliffs. In the inventory, use the hair on the skull, then use the egg on the skull, then the spell book on the skull and finally use the skull on Nightmare the winged horse. Get on and ride Nightmare and you'll end up in the Realm of the Dead.

Talk to the King and Queen and get a ticket, then walk east to the entrance. Use the ticket on the Door Master. Look at the Knight and the gauntlet. Take the gauntlet, then walk north to the River Styx.

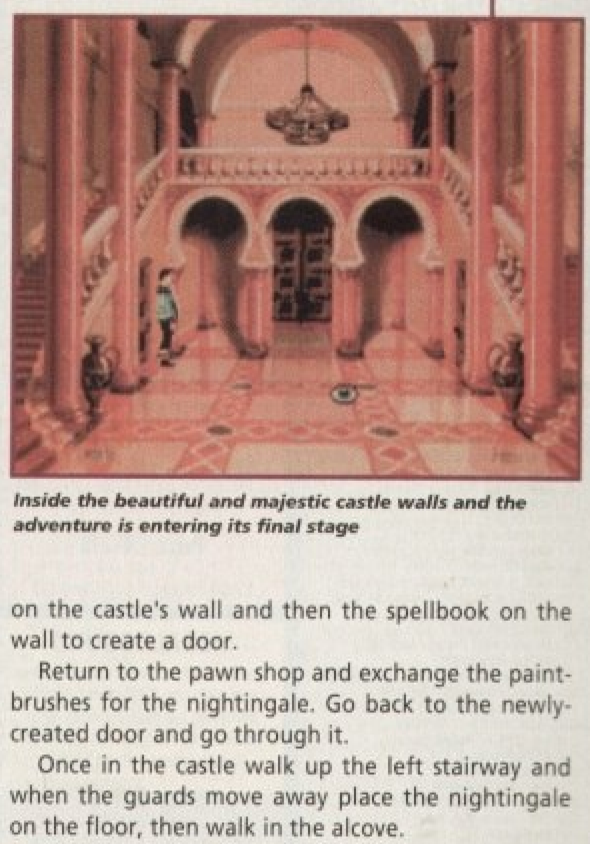
At the River Styx use the tea cup on the river to get some styx water. Give the dead man coins to Charon. Walk towards the Lord of the Dead.

To challenge him use the gauntlet, then make him cry by using the magic mirror on him. You'll now return to the beach with the King and Queen in tow.

After landing on the beach go to the crossroads and give the rose to the nightingale. Walk to the village and swap the old lamp with the genie replica lamp at the lamp sellers.

Enter the book sellers and give the lamp to Jollo, then leave and go to the pawn shop. Swap the tinder box for the painters brushes.

Go now to the Castle's side wall and stir the swamp ooze with the feather. Use the paintbrushes



Inside the beautiful and majestic castle walls and the adventure is entering its final stage

on the castle's wall and then the spellbook on the wall to create a door.

Return to the pawn shop and exchange the paintbrushes for the nightingale. Go back to the newly-created door and go through it.

Once in the castle walk up the left stairway and when the guards move away place the nightingale on the floor, then walk in the alcove.

Click on the pillar and hide behind it. Click on the portrait to remove it, then take the nail. Walk out of the alcove and go into the Vizier's bedroom – use the nail to open the trunk. Click on the letter to read it, then exit the room.

Walk north to the north hallway and talk to Cassima through the door, then place the dagger under the door. Walk back to the main hallway and show the letter to Saladin. Walk up to Cassima and the King, Queen and a genie will appear.

Follow the Vizier and then get the lamp off Jollo to use on the genie. Get the sword off the wall and use it to defeat the Vizier.

Well done you completed Kings Quest 6 and all that's left to do is sit back and watch the end animation.

# GAMES

- MEGABALL Breakout – very addictive
- STAR TREK I (2 disks) Space (Not A1200)
- CASTLE OF DOOM Adventure
- GOLDEN FLEECE Text only adventure
- CARD GAMES Harp, Plait, Queens etc
- RETURN TO EARTH Elite type
- LLAMATRON 512K & 1Mb Shoot 'em up
- ESCAPE FROM JOVI Space Arcade
- BATTLEFORCE Fantasy roll playing game
- DRAGON CAVE Dungeon Master type
- GREYSLAYER Arcade adventure
- STAR TREK 2 (3 disks)Not 1200
- FRUIT MACHINE * Excellent
- MECHFORCE (2 Disks) RPG
- AIR ACE II World War 2 S.E.U.
- TREASURE HUNT (6-8 yrs)
- CHEAT LIST GAMES V1.8
- TREK-73 Space text adv
- ZEUS – THE GAME Puzz tiles
- DUNGEON DELVER (2 Disks) Mazes
- PICK UP A PUZZLE * (2 Disks) Jigsaws
- CHAINSAW DEATH * Futuristic maze type
- CAN YOU PICTURE IT * (2 Disks) Jigsaw
- BALLOONACY * Bomb the skyscrapers
- BLACKJACK Card game
- AMIGAMAN GAMES 10 games
- STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION (Not A1200)
- HACK Text adv
- DRAGON TILES Great tiles game
- BOARD GAMES
- ATIK ATAK C64 game
- BART SIMPSON Scrolling S.E.U.
- RAMIFY Pairing
- RUSH HOUR Frogger – Get across the road
- WIZARD WORLD S.E.U. Platform
- WORLD OF FOOLS Shoot em up
- CARD SHARP 5 card games
- TOTAL WAR Risk type
- SKYFLYER WWII S.E.U.
- PUGGLES Q'bert brill
- SQUATS REVENGE Wolf clone
- PAIR IT Shapes
- GAMES COMPILATION I 6 games
- ATLANTIS I Strategy
- NAPOLEONIC WAR SIMULATION Strategy
- MISSION RAID PART II S.E.U
- SNAKES & LADDERS Good
- GAMES GALORE VOL 7 For the young
- AIR WARRIOR Flight simulation
- G152 DUNGEONS OF NADROJ Hacktype
- G153 QUICK & SILVER Platform. Excellent
- G154 MASTER OF THE TOWN Shoot the sign posts
- G156 ETHOS Text adv + pics
- G157 BATTLE CARS 3D cars S.E.U.
- G158 CHALLENGER Quiz - 5 player
- G182 CATACOMB Graphic adv – very well done
- G183 KINGDOM AT WAR War games
- G184 SMASH TV RIPOFF S.E.U. Futuristic
- G185 DOODY Mario type platform
- G186 PICK OUT Pair it. V. good
- G187 NU-SHOOT EM UP Space
- G189 STRIKE BALL Baseball. Brill!
- G192 CRAZY SUE Platform. 1st rate
- G193 HENRY IN PANIC Manic Miner type
- G194 CONCENTRATION V3.3 Pair it type
- G195 DESTINATION MOONBASE Thrust
- G196 ESCAPE FROM JOVI III Caves
- G197 NO MANS LAND War S.E.U.
- G198 DOMINOES V. Good
- G200 MIDNIGHT THIEF GAME Adv
- G204 GRUB GRABBER II Help Elvin! Avoid gremlin
- G205 SWORD OF WORLOCK 3 disk Adv.
- G206 A NIGHT AT THE TOP Terrorist adv
- G208 QUADRIX Puzz. Excellent
- G209 YUM YUM *. Pacman
- G210 REVENGE MUTANT CAMELS S.E.U.
- G211 BATTLEMENTS Hunchback platform
- G212 LEMMINGOIDS Blast them!
- G218 KARATE WORM Platform-cute
- G219 SNAKE IN THE GRASS Platform – neat
- G221 WIZARDS DOMAIN Graphic adv
- G222 PIXIE KINGDOM (2 disks)
- G223 ARCADIA Breakout – very popular
- G224 PORK A PORK Stop the foxes
- G225 MR BRICK – Mario type
- G226 RAID III S.E.U. – wicked
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- G228 WOTSITSNAME Quiz
- G229 TETREN – tetris
- G230 NUMPTY & THE ALIEN INVADERS
- G233 OMEGA RACE S.E.U. Great
- G234 MENTAL IMAGES DISK 2 3 games
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- G263 TANX Great 98%
- G264 DEFENDA Arcade 95% Brilliant conversion
- G265 GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR Mega
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- G347 ESCAPE Into space!
- G348 RUMMY Excellent card game
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- G376 LIBERATOR GAME Shoot-em-up
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- G385 MORIA v5.4 Latest
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- G394 MARIO IN WONDERLAND Brill clone – Mega!
- G396 GIDDY Great new platform game
- G398 ATOMS Weird!
- G399 VECTA STORM Brill new Tempest clone
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- G402 TETRIS PRO
- G403 SUPER PACMAN 92
- G404 BRIDGE
- G405 18th HOLE GOLF (2 disks)
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- G407 THEY CAME FROM OUTER SPACE Shoot em up
- G408 SON OF BLAGGER Excellent platform
- G409 BRAINBOW Addictive puzzle
- G410 MYSTERY 2144 AD Futuristic Murder adv.
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# Ishar 3

## INTRODUCTION

**Silmaril's Ishar games have earned a well-deserved place in most RPG games players' collections. Renowned for their superb graphics which have their own unique style and their deep and absorbing plots, it's little wonder that they have become one of the most popular RPGs around.**

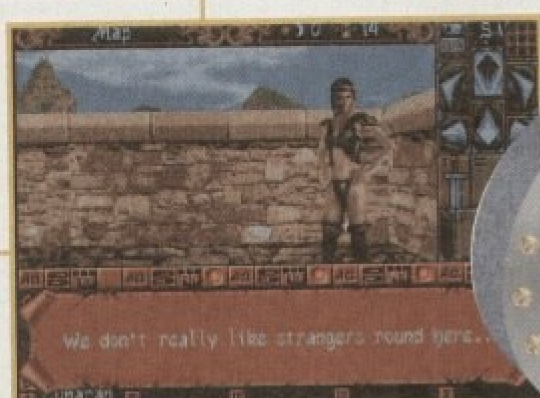
**And now Silmarils are set to stun once again with their final episode to complete the trilogy.**




*Characters will give vital clues*



**Tina Hackett dons her wizards hat, grabs her magic wand and stumbles in to the world of spells and sorcery to see what's conjuring in Ishar 3**




*You will meet many different characters on your travels...even bikini-clad women in thigh boots*







*Fight scenes can now have a tactical approach*




*Make up your team from the vast amount of characters available*

## STORYLINE

The complete story of Ishar stretches right back over four games, starting off with the "Crystals of Arborea" where Jarel, Prince of the Elves, sets out to find the magic crystals which would oppose the power of the evil Morgoth, the black god. He succeeds and kills Morgoth. Jarel becomes ruler and the country is renamed Kendoria.

Ishar: Legend of the Fortress went on to tell of how the fortress of Ishar – which belonged to Krogh, offspring of Morgoth – was conquered by a group of adventurers. The powers of chaos were banished from Kendoria and it then became the 'in' place to be, so to speak.

A city developed and was named "Zach's Island." A powerful figure emerged – the cities bad guy, Shandar, monk of chaos – and he became your modern day drug dealer, selling hallucinogenic potions.

In Ishar 2, Messengers of Doom the "Messengers" succeeded in freeing "Zach's Island" from Shandar's influence. Shandar was killed or so everyone thought, but he devised a spell before his death that allowed his vital energy and consciousness to survive even after the death of his body. He now intends to return in the form of the deadly winged dragon, Wohratax.

Shandar's plan is flawed however, in that the reincarnation can only take place during the planetary conjunction of the two moons, the sun and the planet Ishar. You must destroy the dragon before this happens.

## GRAPHICS

One of the most outstanding aspects of the Ishar series has been the graphics. They create the rich atmosphere that always seems abundant in the Ishar games. This third offering is no exception and continues the high standard set by its predecessors.

The many different locations provide variety and the vast attention to detail that has been paid to each scene is amazing. Outdoor locations include everything from towns, jungles and fortresses to caverns, while indoor settings range from libraries, taverns and temples. Each one is full of intricate detail and really make the game.

However, while a great deal of atmosphere has been created by using night and day time sequences (i.e. the scene goes from dark to light) it has been done at the expense of practicalities such as being able to see where you are!

This results in having to lie low until dawn breaks and is rather frustrating when you are just in the middle of getting somewhere.

Characters have been nicely animated and add realism to the game and the sprites are imaginative and well created.

**80%**

## FLASHBACK

There have been many RPGs on the Amiga to compare Ishar 3 to.

Ishar 3 is your more traditional role-playing adventure, both visually and in gameplay. It is superior to a lot of its counterparts in its superb graphics and web of plots and sub-plots.

Recently we have seen Thalion's Ambermoon, the sequel to Amberstar. This impressed and received a mighty 81% (AMC75). Ishar 3 is similar in the graphical style it uses which is that of 'traditional' RPGs. However, Ambermoon also employs an overhead, two-dimensional view.

A more obvious comparison to make would be with Ishar 1 and 2. Ishar 3 compares favourably, both graphically and with the actual size of the game.

Ishar 3 will prove a classic RPG, rating among some of the classics of this genre.

## SOUND

Unfortunately there isn't a great deal of sound to comment on, which may be a good thing compared to the sound that is actually used. For instance, the occasional bell tolls in the distance, or a brief if rather irrelevant tune is played when you walk into an Inn.

The game starts with a moody tune which does conjure up the atmosphere and it's a great shame that some other music couldn't have been used throughout the game.

In a title of this nature, things could have really been enhanced by a good choice of tunes or effects.

**41%**

> We live in a fantasy world, a world of illusion. The great task in life is to find reality.
>
> *Iris Murdoch, English novelist*



*Down at the local Inn you can recruit new characters*



*Night falls – and the only option is to rest for a while*



*The shop gives you the opportunity to buy lots of useful goodies*

## ADDITIONAL INFO

The plot in Ishar 3 focuses on the idea that Shandar's soul can come back in another form. This belief, known as reincarnation, says that the human spirit can still live again in another human, plant or animal. It is also referred to as transmigration or metempsychosis.

Many religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism have this belief as a fundamental part of their religion. The Hindus, whose beliefs originated around 4,500 years ago, say that all living things are part of a divine life that transmute to one form or the other – sometimes a plant, an insect or human depending on its karma or past actions.

## OPINION 80%

Despite some of the grumbles I may have about the night-time effects and the sound, Ishar 3 is one of the most absorbing and atmospheric adventures around.

There are many characters to meet, plenty of beautifully created locations to explore and tonnes of puzzles to solve.

There are a massive 100 characters to make your team from, all having differing skills and personalities. Each has a character which can effect the action in the game. One may lie or another may have murderous tendencies, for example.

You'll need to choose your actions carefully. Say you wanted to assassinate a member of the party and another character has sympathies with the victim, he may then kill the murderer. This psychological aspect works well and provides much of the intrigue.

On your quest you will meet bad guys as well as the good. A tactical element has been added to the fight scenes and by means of a tacti-grid you can place the stronger characters in the front line for fighting.

The plots and sub plots in Ishar 3 are cleverly set around a series of time gates. These allow you to access other lands in the past or future. Past events can change the present and future and you'll need to pick up key plot points found throughout the history of Ishar.

Inns play a vital part in the game and offer the opportunity to rest your team, eat, listen out for information and to enrol new members. At the Inn you'll find some great animations with characters that will impart important information.

In typical RPG style, the use of spells is an essential and fun aspect of Ishar 3. There are about 30 spells to choose from, ranging from attack and defence spells to 'telepathic reconnaissance' and teleportation.

There is an unlimited game saving facility which, believe me, you will definitely need and also the facility to re-load teams from Ishar 1 and 2.

There is just so much to do in Ishar 3, apart from the overall objective, that your mind will be continually boggling over specific puzzles and problems.

Even for the most experienced role-players this will be a tough game to crack, promising lasting appeal.

This is a superb addition to the Ishar series and fans of the previous games will not be disappointed. It really is a top quality, atmospheric adventure.

Silmarils have excelled once again in their aim to create, "the computer version of a Tolkien adventure, rich in dream-like images, colour, sound and plot."




*The addition of a relatively cheap monorail is a good move in Theme Park, enabling your visitors to travel around in style*



**AMIGA PLATINUM AWARD**

## INTRODUCTION

I have been waiting for this one ever since I saw the pulsating reviews that the PC version received and now it has arrived. Labelled by some as one of the most eagerly-awaited games ever, the pressure was on Bullfrog's business simulator to perform and do the err, business.

I'll admit to thinking that the game might have been hyped to oblivion and that it can't possibly be that good.

I should've really cast these thoughts aside because a casual glance at Bullfrog's back catalogue of software (Populous, Flood, Powermonger, Syndicate) should have put my fears aside.

I don't want to and don't have to wait until the end of the review to tell you just how good Theme Park is. It is bloomin' marvellous and I know that it'll be top of the software charts for a good long time to come.

On the surface it looks like a cutesy, OK kinda game, but underneath there is a startling, in-depth business/strategy simulation that you can't fail to be impressed by.

Theme Park heralds a new era in computer games and it's an era I've been waiting a good few years for.

# Theme

**You are now entering the Theme Park zone. A world full of over-inflated burger prices, coasters that roll and castles that bounce. Jonathan Maddock takes you around what must be the game of the year.**

## SOUND

The sound in Theme Park is the vital part of atmosphere generation and thankfully Bullfrog has included it in abundance. Each ride has its own specific tune which plays when your mouse pointer wanders over it.

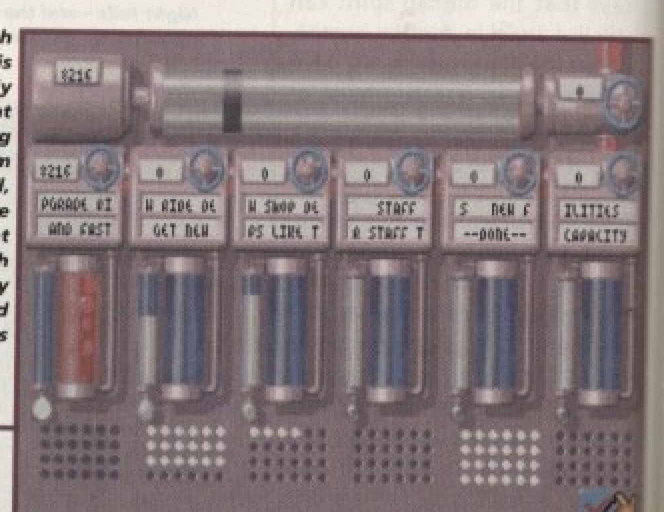
The tunes don't last forever though, which means you're not plagued by annoying music which starts off good and then gets monotonous.

The sound effects, of which there are many, seem to go by without you noticing them and it's quite hard to name a specific sound, but they are there. It's just that they add to the whole atmosphere of the game rather than just providing you with a second's entertainment.

The only other bit of sound is the introduction which features plenty of sampled speech and I guarantee that you won't fail to raise a grin by the time you see the roller coaster sequence. Buy the game to see what I'm on about!

**76%**

*The research screen is highly important when playing either the sim or full level, otherwise you'll get stuck with some really dull rides and shops*





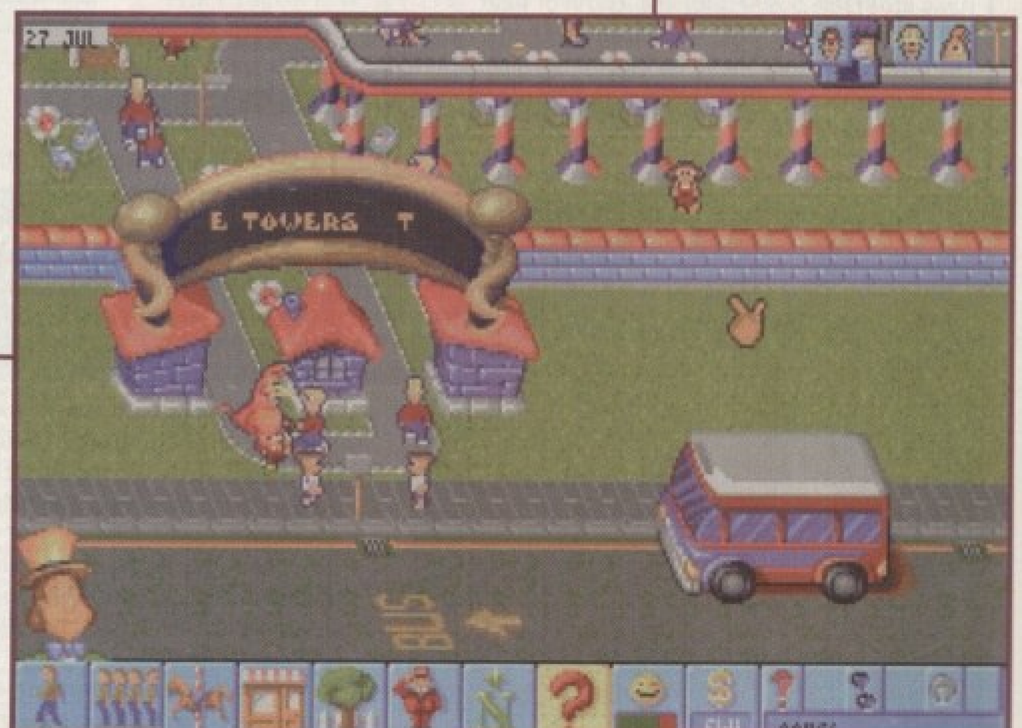


Some of the rides like the roller coaster are user-definable, but don't go too wild because visitors can fall out of their seats!




Various aspects of the shops can be altered. Chips can be made saltier, thus inducing the visitors towards the drink stands

- **Publisher: Electronic Arts**
- **Developer: Bullfrog**
- **Disks: 4**
- **Price: £34.99**
- **Genre: Business sim**
- **Hard Disk Install: Yes**
- **Control System: Mouse**
- **Supports: A500/A600/A1200/A4000**
- **Recommended: 68020 upwards**




The bus pulls up to the Theme Park gates and the happy visitors all pile out to be met by a man wearing a chicken suit!

# ePark

## GRAPHICS

I don't even know where to begin where the visuals in Theme Park are concerned. From the amazing introduction (even though it's not quite as good as the PC version) you know that you're about to experience a product of sheer quality.

Once you've found your feet and you begin to experiment a little, you start to notice all the hundreds (literally!) of little touches.

Your visitors wander around with expressions that range from happiness or that burst out in tears, to green faces after a particularly rough time on one of the rides, due to Hamburgus fillus faceus toomuchus.

The rides themselves are the real stars of the game. You start off with basic and very safe rides, such as the bouncy castle and the tea-cup ride which are beautifully presented. After a bit of research you then progress to bigger and more scarier rides, such as the roller-coaster and the haunted house. The control system is clean, well-presented and the icons are designed, so it's obvious just what you're clicking on. The static screens are also spot-on, the management deals over the table and the end sequence when your parks goes bankrupt are two prime examples.

The animation is smooth and everything flows nicely around the screen like it should do. The little graphical touches such as the introduction of scenery (trees, stumps, fences, fountains) enable you to design a park which can be as picturesque as you want it to be.

There is graphically so much to Theme Park that I'd take up the whole magazine talking about it. The best thing to do is just sit back in a comfy chair and admire the screenshots.

Cute as hell and in quiet moments even the toughest male on the planet has got a good chance of going "Ahhhh".

**80%**

## SIMULATION

Theme Park can be played three ways. Your first choice should be the sandbox level which is aimed specifically at beginners. You can enjoy all the fun of the Theme Park without having to trouble yourself with the strains of dealing with the bank, plus you don't have to do any research and you'll never run out of stock for your shops.

The next level upwards is the sim level. Here you can do some research and also some negotiation screens pop up periodically where you have to barter over staff wages.

Only on Full level do you get to utilise all of Theme Park's options. You're personally responsible for every financial transaction and rival operators can have shares in your park.

Theme Park looks highly cutesy on the outside, but the game is so in-depth that every single thing you could possibly think of has been fully catered for.

Chips shops on your park have salt levels which can be decreased and increased. An increase will make your park visitors thirsty, so a few sign-posts pointing towards your Pokey Cola shop can reap you big financial rewards.

Theme Park will take you an hour to master the controls, but you will spend weeks before you start to run a profitable business for any length of time.

The game is the first in Bullfrog's Designer Series. The series is entirely made up of business simulations, which is where Bullfrog believe the future of computer games will lie.



*The cash is rolling in thanks to the row of shops selling everything from burgers to balloons at over-inflated prices*

## ADDITIONAL INFO

The first theme park, Disneyland opened in 1955 in Anaheim California. The park centred around Walt Disney's cartoon characters and covered approximately 74 acres. Walt Disney World covers a massive 27,000 acres and was opened in 1971 near Orlando Florida.

Walt Disney World was enhanced in 1982 thanks to the introduction of the EPCOT centre which features displays of future technology and re-creates historical landmarks.

Other Disney parks include the Tokyo Disneyland and EuroDisney in France, which covers an area one-fifth the size of Paris. That's the USA, France and Japan catered for, but Brits haven't got it so bad with 15 theme parks spread throughout the UK.

The three largest are Alton Towers in Staffordshire (opened in 1979) which attracts over 2 million visitors annually, Thorpe Park (1980) and Chessington World of Adventure (1987), both of which are situated in Surrey.

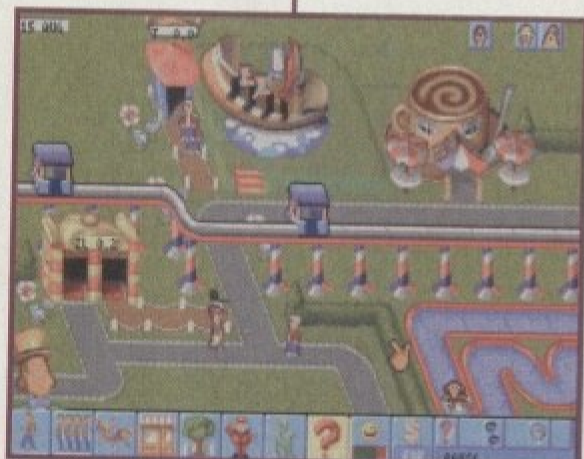
## FLASHBACK

Looking back throughout games' history, there isn't anything exactly like Theme Park, but there are few that come fairly close. The Populous series of games, also created by Bullfrog, virtually changed the software industry overnight and expanded game creators' thoughts past the platformer and the shoot-'em-up.

The idea was to create your own populous by flattening and raising land while battling with an opponent who had the exact same goal, via some help from natural disasters.

The actual laying down of houses and settlement is very much like the construction section in Theme Park, but that's where any similarity ends.

I can't even remember anything else remotely like Bullfrog's business simulator, but that just goes to prove that the game is a completely original product.



*One of my favourites rides in Theme Park is the superb Pirate Ship and, err here's a picture of it just for you*



*Placing food shops too close to rides like the Spinner can cause your visitors to go green and thus start producing pavement pizzas*

## OPINION 92%

Theme Park is by far the best game I've played this year. Just as Populous arrived and changed the industry for the better, I think Theme Park is here now to give other software houses a good kick up the backside, just to show them what can be done on the Amiga.

It is a product of sheer high quality, is bound to sell by the truckload and it's all down to one simple and often forgotten thing. Originality. Theme Park, with its three simulation scales, will appeal to just about everyone. Via these scales you can make the simulation as in-depth as you want it to be.

The best thing about the game in my opinion is that it is a fun game to play. You can't help but smile and have a good laugh while you're busy creating your park.

The only down point to Theme Park is that it is a tad slow on the lower grade Amigas. To get the best out of it you'll need some fastRAM or an accelerator, but that said it still plays well, upgrade or not.

The graphics are simply exquisite, the sound is excellent, it is as playable as hell and more addictive than any drug. It oozes sheer class and everyone that has seen it has had nothing but praise for Bullfrog's business simulator.

I could enthuse about Theme Park all day, but I don't want to because right now I want to get back to my A1200 to continue constructing my park.

To quickly sum up, Theme Park is a quality title designed by a quality software developer, and if you decide not to buy this game it could well become one of the worst decisions your ever likely to make.

# Top

## INTRODUCTION

Despite its name, Top Gear 2 has nothing to do with Jeremy Clarkson et al. In fact it's the latest race-'em-up from Gremlin that promises to be "the fastest ever Amiga racing game."

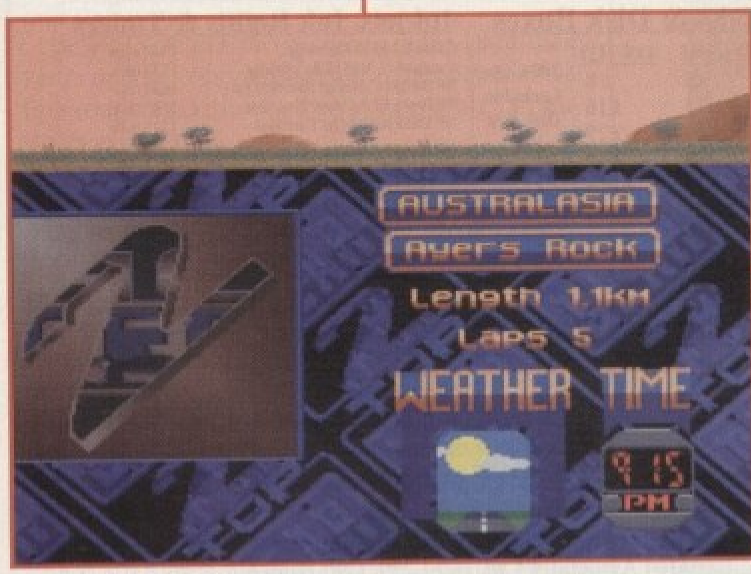
Released on the SNES to high critical acclaim and receiving the glitzy award for the1993 Gamesplayer SNES Racing Game of the Year, it has now been ported over to the Amiga.




*Win enough money to upgrade your engine for some real speed*




*These clichéd phrases certainly don't bring anything to the game*




*Take note of the weather before you buy*

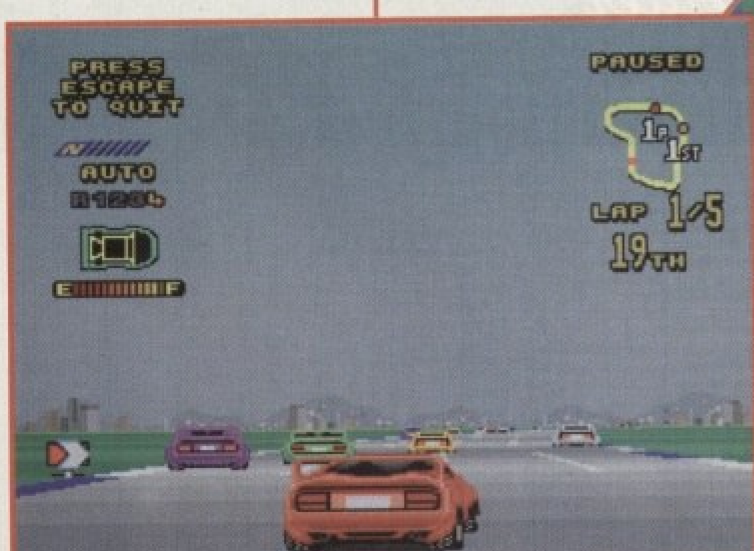
## SOUND

This is the sort of thing nightmares are made of! Imagine a lawnmower sample for the roar of the engine, the nitros conveyed by the hum of a washing machine and the squeal of the breaks by the sound of a demented Hamster.

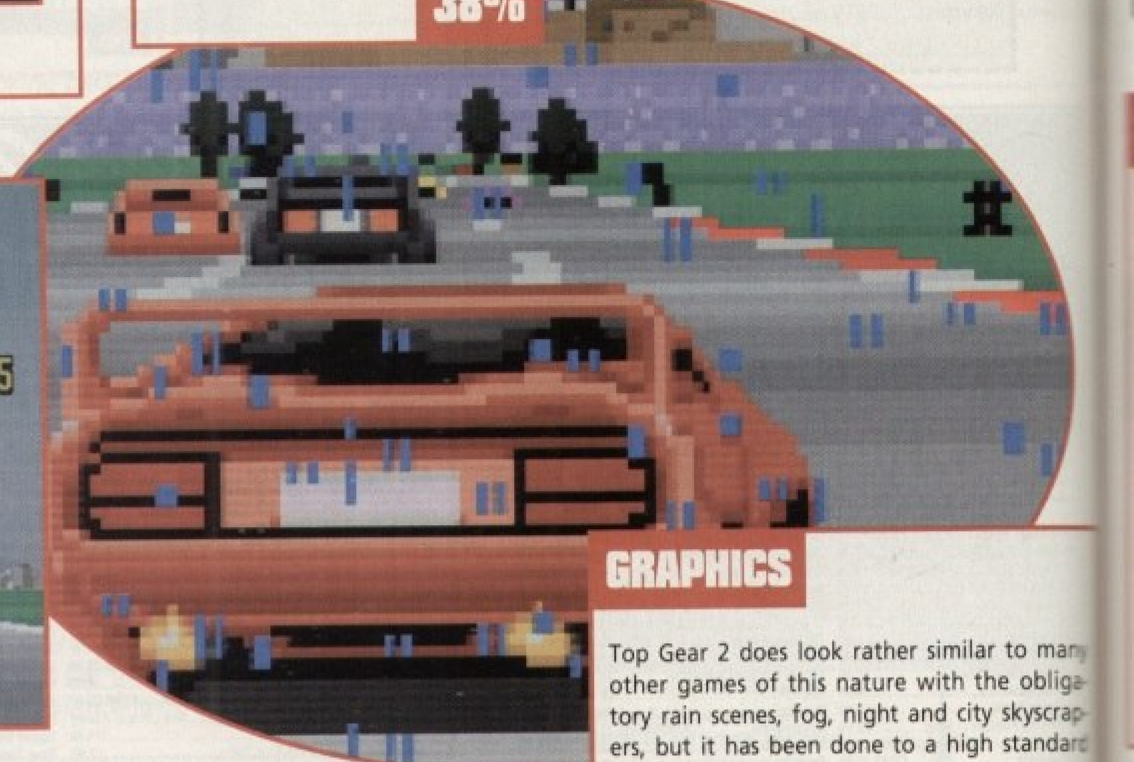
This is about all you need to accurately recreate the sound in Top Gear 2 – it really is this dreadful.

The music option is quite a competent attempt but it is very tacky and mindnumbingly boring and repetitive after a while.

**38%**




*Don't collide with your opponents or it'll put you back a fair bit*



*The variable weather conditions keeps it interesting*

## GRAPHICS

Top Gear 2 does look rather similar to many other games of this nature with the obligatory rain scenes, fog, night and city skyscrapers, but it has been done to a high standard and looks good.

The actual car itself seems to hover unconvincingly above the track and the rear view of the car is relatively unimpressive even when the nitros are activated, with a feeble fire effect appearing out of the exhausts.

The apparent "cut and paste" job on the scenery also spoils things quite a lot. While it is a nice idea illustrating the background with significant landmarks of a country, it becomes so obvious that the scenery has been continually repeated that it looks unconvincing.

In fact it becomes quite laughable as you count how many Sydney opera houses you pass, or how many Pyramids and the like.

**60%**

## FLASHBACK

There are quite a few games that are rather like Top Gear 2. Many have taken on the formula of a sports car racing along the open road in various countries, with things getting difficult when bad weather occurs or there are obstacles on the track.

Lotus, for instance, is similar both in looks and gameplay, with the typical rain and fog scenes, or the logs and barriers on the tracks.

Crazy Cars 3 is also quite similar, but the game added interest with an extra element of betting wagers with rival racers and also the option to upgrade your car.

Top Gear 2 rates around average with games of a similar nature. It does introduce some sort of tactical element with the upgrades you can buy for your car, and you'll need to decide when and what to spend your race winnings on.

Check the weather report to see whether you should replace your tyres with better versions adapted for wet or dry conditions, or spend your cash on improving nitros for better speed ups.



# Gear 2

**Tina Hackett plays girl racer for the day to take a look at Gremlin's Top Gear 2...**

## SIMULATION

Well, having never driven a high-powered super sports car (any offers?), it can only be left to the imagination how close to the real thing this is.

Unfortunately the control method certainly doesn't do a great deal to enhance realism and the steering isn't all that responsive, constantly reminding you that you are just using a joystick and controlling a graphic on the screen.

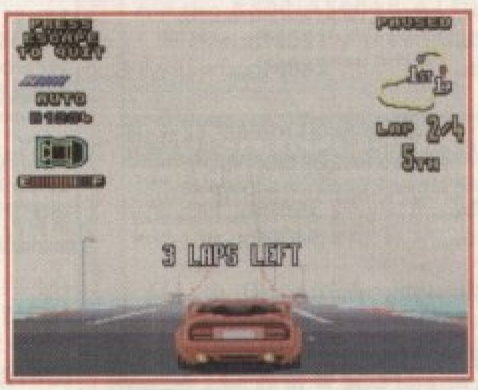
The game does create the speed of the car well and you do actually move along at a fair old pace.

The sound effects are adequate, but they don't create the nail-biting tension that these games should and don't sound all that convincing.

Also you are blessed with a rubber car, in the sense that even when you crash at full speed into a concrete wall you'll still bounce right off again with no harm done.

Great for prolonging the race but hardly realistic – I mean whatever happened to those impressive explosions that kept things exciting?

What I'm trying to say is you don't really get absorbed into the action as with some racing games and somehow the excitement isn't there.




*Fog makes driving conditions treacherous*




*Count the landmarks as you drive past!*

## ADDITIONAL INFO

Car racing has always held wide appeal, both with participators and spectators alike. It has taken on many different forms from Stock Car Racing to Formula One Grand Prix – the first organised race being from Paris to Rouen in 1894.

There are many circuits that have been built for the purpose such as Silverstone and Nurburgring, along with street circuits including Monte Carlo and Monaco.

Many racing drivers have become household names through their profession – Graham Hill, Stirling Moss and Jackie Stewart all finding fame through this means.

Motor racing is not without its dangers though – even for the spectators. One of the worst ever motor racing disaster was at Le Mans race-track when 80 people were killed when three cars collided at 150mph, crashing into the spectators stand.

- Publisher: Gremlin
- Developer: In-house
- Disks: 2
- Price: £25.99
- Genre: Race-'em-up
- Hard disk install: Yes
- Control system: Joystick/Keyboard
- Supports: A1200
- Recommended: 68020

## OPINION 70%

There are a few things that worry me about this game. While on the surface the game plays fairly well and everything chugs along quite acceptably, there are things that let it down.

For instance, gameplay is distracted by these supposedly "hip" phrases interrupting the proceedings. Overtake a car, for example, and a bubble of speech will appear reading "Yo, eat my dust", "Crash 'n' burn" and other equally irritating phrases.

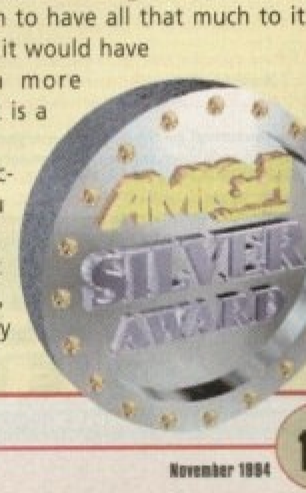
And another point to note: all your opponents seem to comprise of the role-model drivers who never put a foot wrong, who never crash into barriers and if you should collide – well, it's you that gets put back a few seconds while they speed off in to the horizon.

No chance for any foul play, no scraping together of paintwork and no mad scramble to overtake – removing tonnes of potential fun! It's not all bad by any means. In fact it is a very playable game with plenty of different tracks – 64 cities in 16 countries – to test your skills. And it is a very, very fast game, especially on a one-player mode.

A two-player game is the usual split-screen affair and is great fun, but unfortunately you can't easily tell who your opponent is from the many other cars of the same colour.

The sound and graphics let the game down a little and it doesn't seem to have all that much to it. Around five years ago it would have been received with more enthusiasm but now it is a little old hat.

If you're a fan of racing games and you have to have another, it is worth a look. It does play fairly well, it's just not particularly original



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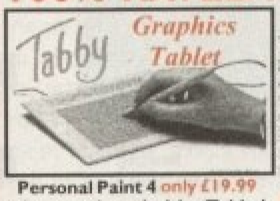
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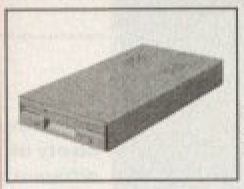
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# On The Ball: World Cup Edition

**Taylor failed, but can you succeed? Dave Cusick tries to lead England to international glory in Ascon's foray into the football management genre**

## INTRODUCTION

A whole gaggle of football games have been released to capitalise on the football fever which inevitably follows the World Cup Finals, but so far they have all been action-based simulations as opposed to tackling the managerial side of things.

On The Ball aims to set that straight, offering up to four players and involving a detailed journey through the qualifying stages to the world cup finals.

It also features what the programmers describe as "Spectacular animated TV-style coverage" of the games, so that you can see your players in action and curse as they miss easy chances or concede disappointing last-gasp equalisers.

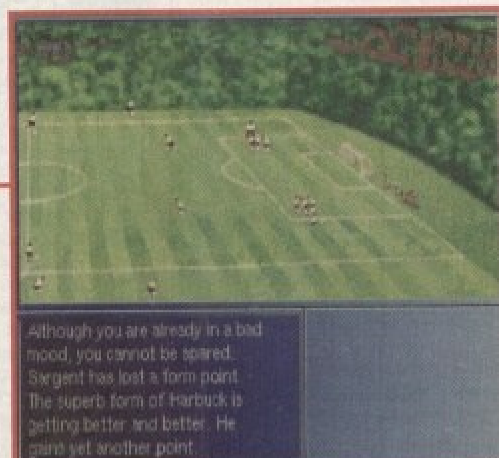
After the game you'll have to deal with the media, who will either tear you to shreds or hail you as a national hero. It's your task to make sure that your name is in the headlines for all the right reasons.



*During the qualifying stages, this sumptuous office is your base of operations*



*After a win there's no better way to spend your evening than getting smashed in the bar. That glass is looking a little bit bendy...*




*You can concentrate on plenty of different skills on the training field, and you can actually watch the players practice*

## SOUND

Located on the desk in your office is a compact disc player, which you can use to select one of two tunes which tinkle away in the background during the off-the-field sections.

Both tunes are passable but not particularly awe-inspiring, and to be honest you may well be tempted to turn down the volume and stick some decent music on in the background while you play.

During the game, moments of drama are usually accompanied by suitable crowd sound effects. The closest you'll come to chants are the occasional "Eng-er-land" style messages which are interspersed with the commentary, but that doesn't matter too much because you'll be paying far more attention to the events on screen anyway.

**52%**




*Come on lads, I want to see you wasting time, hacking their men and always taking the dives. You can tell this game was written in Germany*

## FLASHBACK

Without a doubt the two top managerial games are Gremlin's Premier Manager 2 and Domark's Championship Manager 94. Premier Manager opts for a fast and friendly approach, where you are given the task of taking over a humble conference team and making your way into the top flight of professional football.

Championship Manager is probably the most detailed game of its type ever conceived, boasting unparalleled attention to detail. It remains my personal favourite because you can immerse yourself in it for hours.

On The Ball tries to break the mould in several areas, not only in its use of the numerous in-game action sequences, but also in opting for a much less text-based approach than its rivals.

There are far fewer player statistics than in Championship Manager, as a system of assigning traits or characteristics such as "Goal poacher" to some players is employed which works well.

## SIMULATION

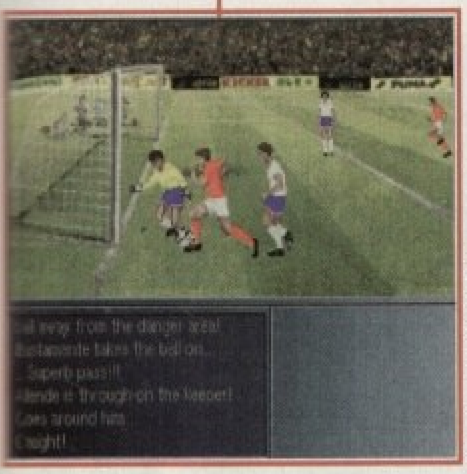
Without ever actually having been an international football manager, I'm not really in the position to say whether or not On The Ball accurately reflects the day-to-day life of such a character. However, it does seem to include every aspect of the job, both on the field and off.

I can't think of another management game in which you get to plan out your player's days in this amount of detail, or where all manner of actions from endorsing products to imposing sex bans on the squad can be carried out.

The game sections themselves usually seem to reflect reality to some extent, although after a while you do become used to certain animations and as a result can predict goals before they are actually scored.

This doesn't really detract from the excitement however. You'll still have your heart in your mouth during penalties or free kicks from critical edge-of-box positions.

**80%**




*Only fine keeping by the England goalie denies the opposition the chance of taking the lead*

- Publisher: Daze
- Developer: Ascon
- Disks: 5
- Price: £29.99, £32.99 (AGA version)
- Genre: Football Management
- HD Install: Essential on A1200 version
- Control system: Mouse
- Supports: A500/A600, A1200/A4000
- Recommended: 68000 upwards

## GRAPHICS

Few management games are as visually pleasing as On The Ball. The programmers have clearly poured a lot of time and effort into creating a realistic and stylish game throughout, and the graphics certainly go a long way towards capturing the correct mood.

The feel of every situation, from the quiet solitude of your hotel room office to the intense glare of a post-game press conference, is captured perfectly by the atmospheric visuals.

For most of the game you'll be looking at these beautifully drawn static screens, but where the action really comes alive is during training sessions and matches.

Here your players perform for you in a range of animated sequences. Despite the size of the players on the screen, these sequences are generally smooth and will certainly impress initially.

Of course, whether you'll still be so keen on them after you've had the game a few weeks remains to be seen, because it doesn't seem possible to skip these animations.

**80%**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

Wednesday 13th October 1993 was the night on which football fans the whole nation over watched their national team miss the world cup boat. This was all the more shocking and disappointing, coming as it did only three years after a heartbreaking and indeed quite unlucky semi-final loss to the eventual winners of the 1990 World Cup, Germany.

Many fans agreed that had England beaten Germany in that fateful penalty shoot-out, they would have been able to beat Argentina in the final and lift the cup for a second time. But in the three years since England's second-finest hour, much had changed.

After two impressive World Cup campaigns, Bobby Robson decided to return to club management. The FA appointed Graham Taylor, whose club credentials were impeccable.

With players such as Bryan Robson and Peter Shilton at the end of their international careers, Taylor decided the time was right for wholesale changes and took several controversial decisions, such as dropping Chris Waddle and Peter Beardsley.

He seemed unable to translate his club success to the international arena and adopted an alarming habit of playing men in roles other than their natural positions.

After playing On The Ball, you will either feel an affinity with Taylor – perhaps he faced an impossible task – or have an ever lower opinion of him than when you started. This could largely depend on which difficulty level you play at.

After failing to qualify for USA 94, Taylor resigned as England Manager. His three year tenure had been an often stormy voyage through the footballing ocean, and few were sorry to see him go in the end.

Now Wolves fans will be hoping he can find his earlier club management success. He shall be remembered as the man who not only managed England's way out of the World Cup, but also for the improper use of the English language that brought him notoriety through the medium of national television.

Indeed, that now immortal phrase which is adorning Fantasy Football League T-shirts the whole country over, accurately sums up for me the whole of Graham Taylor's international career: "Do I not like that?"

*Facing the press is fine after a win, but if the result hasn't gone your way you could be in for a grilling*




AMIGA BRONZE AWARD

## OPINION 65%

Accomplished and enjoyable though it is, On The Ball: World Cup Edition still only simulates the qualifiers and finals of the World Cup.

International management is interesting enough, but for many there simply won't be enough involvement with the players on the almost personal level, such as that which can develop during extended sessions playing Championship Manager.

To be honest I can't help but feel that domestic league and cup competitions work better in a computer game. Also, something is definitely lost through the use of fictitious player names.

However, there is still plenty of depth; taking one of the footballing minnows to the finals is a real challenge on the higher difficulty settings.

You'll need a hard drive for the A1200 version, although the A500 version won't call for one. Ascon say this is due to the improved graphics on the AGA machines.

On The Ball is a good game by anybody's standards, but for me it still doesn't quite top the league. It's more a sort of Newcastle United, providing plenty of entertainment, but not quite able to catch the Blackburn and Manchester United of Premier Manager and Championship Manager respectively.



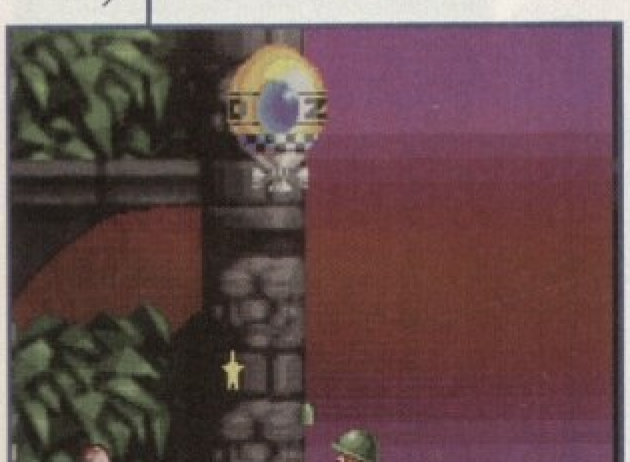
*Putty uses his powers of pliability to reach one of those important stars which further enhance his abilities*



*Look at that boy stretch! One of the MIAs starts bouncing for joy as Putty steps up the rescue mission*



*By punching the green crates which are sporadically placed around the level, you'll receive a wealth of goodies*



*Putty calls upon the powers of his airship to help him get rid of his opponent who is secure in a bunker*



# Putty

## INTRODUCTION

Two years ago a game arrived on the Amiga games scene that redefined the parameters of the platform games character. Putty was its name and it was received well by press and gamesplayers alike. With scores that didn't go below 90%, Putty was a breath of fresh air in the dull genre of platformers.

System 3, responsible for such quality pieces of software as Myth, created Putty, a character who was able to stretch and morph his (her?) way to computer game success. There was so much more that you could do with your flexible friend that it was quite unlike any other platformer on the market.

Even though the idea was highly original, Putty also shone brighter in the graphics and sound departments than anything that had gone before it.

The sound effects such as carrots shouting "Uzi 9mm" played a major part in the game's success by making it far more entertaining and dare I say it, more fun than a lot of its competitors.

We're now heading towards the end of 1994 and System 3 are back with a vengeance. The sequel to their platform star of 1992, Putty Squad is about to hit the shop shelves and it looks bigger and better than its predecessor.

I fear the world is about to go Putty mad once more.

## SOUND

Sonically, Putty Squad is a notch above the rest. The musical tune which runs throughout isn't too loud and although it sounds rather nifty, the volume is set at this level for one reason. The musical stars are, of course, the humourous sound samples which pop up every few seconds.

Almost every character within the game has their own select sound. From when the Putty shouts when he collects one of his mates to the end laughter when you fail after losing all your lives, every sound, err, sounds great and I can do nothing but applaud the music maestro who put it all together.

Just the introduction of these select samples makes the game more fun to play, inducing you to search out new characters just to see what they say.

Perhaps the best use of the sound sample is when you pick up the musical note icon. Sitting behind a pair of decks, the DJ promptly appears and spins an outrageous scratch-filled hip-hop record.

Immediately, all the enemies stop doing whatever they were doing and start to dance their socks off for a good 20 seconds, allowing Putty to go about his business untroubled. A nice touch of the highest quality.

**80%**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

The aim of Putty Squad is to rescue all your plasticine chums who are being held prisoners of war by the evil cat tribe. Along the way through your missions there are several objects which can be picked up. Pick up ten stars and Putty will gain a more powerful punch, 20 will give you arrows to fire, while 30 will give Putty an electric finger to zap his enemies with.

Other goodies include food to top up your health, springs to reach those hard, err, out-of-reach places and jars of nitro-glycerine which enable Putty to make bombs which will cause as much destruction as possible




*Punch this pesky cat in the guts and he falls to the ground. You can now bounce on his tum to reach those hard out-of-reach places*

- Publisher: System 3
- Developer: System 3
- Disks: 2
- Price: £25.99
- Genre: Arcade platform
- Hard disk install: No
- Control system: Joystick
- Supports: A1200/A4000
- Recommended: 68000 upwards




*My name is Michael Caine, know what I mean? Putty dons some specs and auditions for the part of Alfie...*




*Using the helpful airship, Putty rescues yet another MIA, but watch out for those pesky rocket men when you come back down to solid ground*

## GRAPHICS

As you might expect, Putty Squad contains some of the best cartoon graphics you've seen in a long time. The variety of characters and the sheer quality of these finely sculptured pixels can't fail to impress even the most platform-hating gamesplayer.

The characters range from new stars such as bulbous toads and menancing magicans to Indian rubber men. The game doesn't forget old favourites such as the rampant rocket men and the maniac gun-toting carrot, who incidently has changed his catchphrase to "achtung!".

The backgrounds have also been improved upon, mainly due to the fact that the Putty Squad development team have now got access to AGA technology. The location of the game seems to be set in and around the far east with Buddahs dotted around the Arab-esque landscape.

The actual Putty character isn't that much different from the one that appeared in the first System 3 platformer, but I guess he doesn't need to be vastly improved, simply because the game creators did it so well first time around.

The blue blob can still squash himself to the ground for protection, stretch into the air to collect objects, form a fist to whack the enemy and can encase/morph into a baddie and take control of him.

The animation is spot on and the smoothness by which the star of the game jumps and squishes around the screen is very impressive.

**85%**

# Squad

**The smell of plasticine is in the air. What else could it be? System 3 hits the stretchy platform trail once more and Jonathan Maddock is nothing but putty in their hands...**




*One quick morph later and Putty has transformed himself into one of the rocket men*

## OPINION **86%**

I have nothing but praise for John Twiddy, the programmer of Putty Squad, because once again he has produced another quality piece of software. The graphics are beautiful and the animation is excellent, especially on the main character.

AMIGA COMPUTING GOLD AWARD

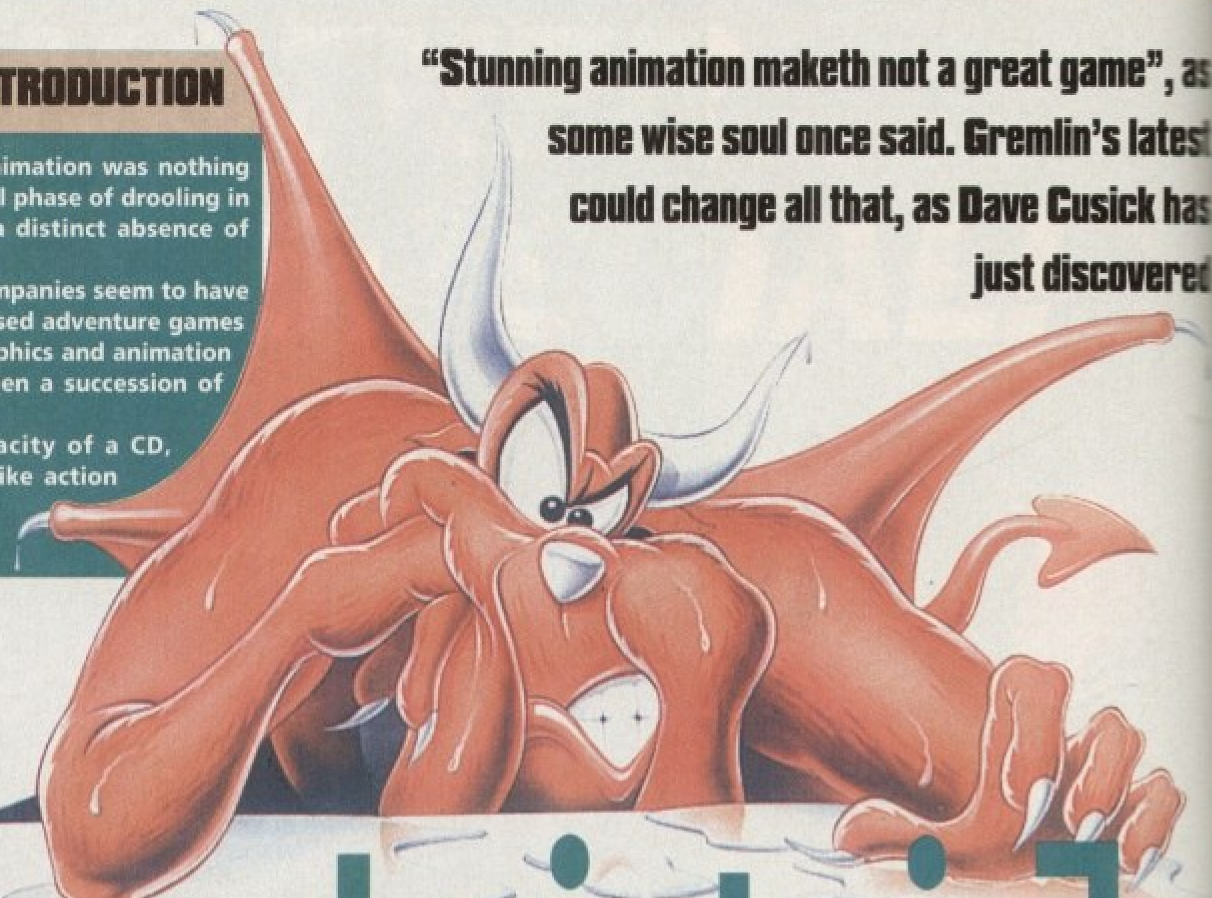
The sound adds a lot to the game, giving the player a lot of laughs as he/she makes his/her way through the various levels. The various missions start off easy and slowly get a lot tougher – even dedicated platform heroes might have a few problems later on.

Thankfully the development team have put an ever-so useful level password option into the game. The only problem is that Putty Squad is for the A1200 only, so A500 owners are going to miss out, but they should move with the times and get themselves a new machine because games like this are slowly becoming more commonplace.

The control method, considering just what Putty can do, is very easy to use and becomes second nature to you after only a couple of goes. It is extremely addictive and I put hand on heart and recommend it to everyone. Die-hard platform freaks and Putty fans are going to love it to death.


ANOTHER
3 DISK SPECIAL!
AMIGA ACTION
On sale 29 September
EXIT

"Stunning animation maketh not a great game", as some wise soul once said. Gremlin's latest could change all that, as Dave Cusick has just discovered



# Litil

## INTRODUCTION

**So-called interactive cartoons really got off on the wrong foot with the infamous Don Bluth Dragon's Lair games. Admittedly, the animation was nothing short of stunning, but once past the initial phase of drooling in wonderment, the astute gamer noticed a distinct absence of anything even approaching gameplay.**

**Fortunately, over the last year or two many companies seem to have got the message and as a result, sprawling CD-based adventure games on the PC have increasingly combined superb graphics and animation with brain-taxing puzzles. The end result has been a succession of smash-hits with gameplay to match the visuals.**

**Making good use of the huge storage capacity of a CD, Gremlin's Litil Divil promises amazing cartoon-like action and a lasting adventure challenge. Can it deliver?**



*A bunch of skeletons inhabit this ranch, although I don't like the look of that bull thing!*



*A typically perplexing puzzle, if Mutt isn't careful he could end up in the void*



*I've never really been interested in chess – especially when the pieces are alive*

## SOUND

Obviously a reasonable proportion of the CD storage space has been given over to providing a decent soundtrack to accompany the action.

While you are romping gaily around the Labyrinth, a selection of tunes ranging from cartoony themes to all-action blockbuster movie-type things are pounding away. At times it sounds like a whole orchestra is packed inside the monitor, and the music always fits the scene perfectly.

Our hero Mutt's large repertoire of moves have appropriate sampled sound effects, many of which are quite humourous.

**85%**

## STORYLINE

Mutt Divil is a highly ranked amateur sleeper with aspirations of becoming a professional in the near future. Annoyingly he's had to attend the annual Grand Council meeting in the Chamber of the Ancients. It might be the only thing that ever happens in the Underworld, but he'd still rather be elsewhere, sleeping.

The Council are meeting to decide who will be chosen to go forth into the Overworld, through the Labyrinth of Chaos, to retrieve the Mystic Pizza of Plenty.

Unfortunately, and also fairly predictably, Mutt has drawn the short straw in this rather critical draw and as a result will have to attempt to complete this seemingly impossible task.

Nobody really holds out a hope for him, except his trainer Vice Alderman Muzzle, because the task has yet to be completed. Still, everybody's thoughts will be with him, if only because they'd really enjoy a piece of that pizza. If possible, his fellow litil divils would also greatly appreciate it if he could get extra anchovies.

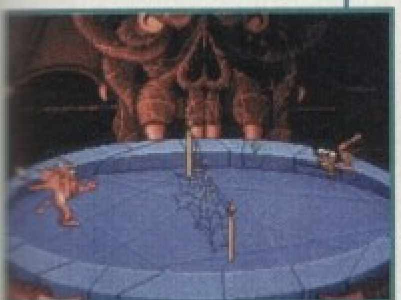
Mutt's quest takes the form of wandering around the maze-like corridors of the labyrinth, entering rooms where he must complete tasks to progress further into the game.



*What ghastly instrument of torture is Mutt about to find himself the victim of?*



Caption required



Caption required

## INTERACTION

Luckily Gremlin saw fit to think about the gamesplayer when producing this piece of software, because for once there's actually sufficient depth and addictiveness present to support the excellent presentation.

Interaction is not limited to simply pushing the joypad in a certain direction at a certain moment. Mutt can perform all manner of tasks, from treading on spidery things to leaping across pits using a combination of buttons and the directional pad.

Your main problem may in fact be deciphering exactly which button does what, since in different rooms their functions are often totally different.

As a result, whenever you enter a new location it is wise to quickly experiment so that you do not become caught in a tricky situation with no idea which buttons to press.

Admittedly there are situations where you will be left with no idea what to do, and there are rooms which cannot actually be completed until you possess certain items, either through picking them up or obtaining them from the store.

If you don't have an item, it may not actually be obvious that you need it, so you could find yourself perplexed as to how to deal with the room.

Still, unless you've failed in a room several times, in which case Mutt will automatically leave the location in disgust, it's always you who's in control and you don't feel simply like a spectator called on only rarely to make some decision.

If interactive cartoons are to succeed then they will have to take a leaf out of Litil Divil's book.

- Publisher: Gremlin
- Developer: Gremlin Ireland
- Disks: N/A
- Price: £29.99
- Genre: Arcade adventure/puzzle
- Hard disk install: N/A
- Control system: Joypad
- Supports: CD32
- Recommended: N/A

# Divil CD32

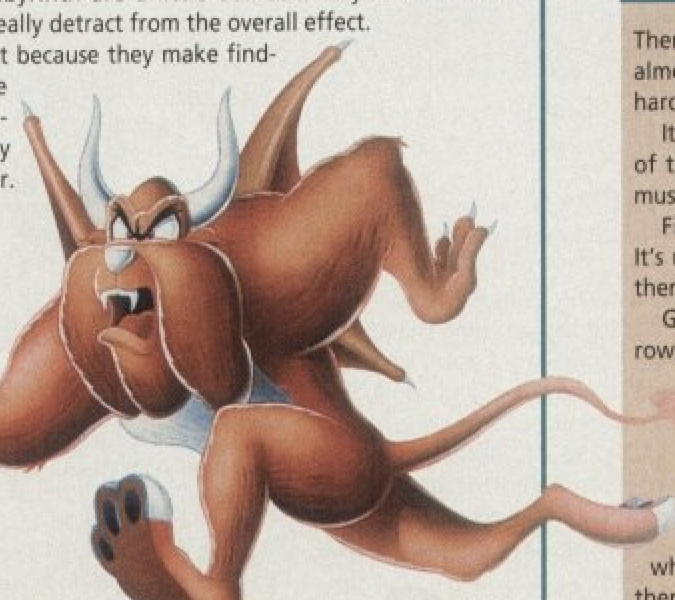
## GRAPHICS

Let's get straight to the point. Litil Divil looks wonderful. The backgrounds are moody and atmospheric, with the puzzle rooms in particular being beautifully drawn and boasting lots of colour.

The Mutt sprite moves excellently and behaves realistically throughout. His range of actions is huge, yet he always moves fluently. He will often amuse thanks to some imaginative and cartoon-like animation.

In short, this is one of the best looking games in a long time. True, the actual corridors of the Labyrinth are a little dull and very similar to one another, but this doesn't really detract from the overall effect.

They add to the interest because they make finding your way around the maze all the more challenging when one hallway looks much like every other.



**88%**

## FLASHBACK

Well, since the CD32 itself is still a relative newcomer, there have not really been many games on this platform that Litil Divil resembles. It would be unfair to group it in with the Don Bluth games on other formats because they really are grossly inferior. Litil Divil is the first of what is sure to become a successful genre on the CD32.

## OPINION **84%**

There's little doubt that Litil Divil is an entertaining title which looks and sounds almost like a proper cartoon. Initially it certainly impresses and to be honest it's hard to fault the presentation in any way.

It is that most rare of products on the CD32, a game which takes full advantage of the machine's capabilities and is not simply an Amiga port with additional music.

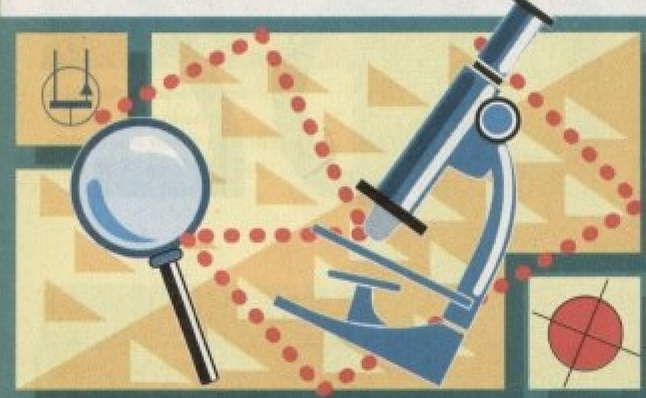
Five levels, none of which are easy, should be enough to last quite some time. It's not the sort of game you would go back to once it has been completed, but then again I shouldn't think many people will finish it in a hurry anyway.

Gremlin should be congratulated. In Litil Divil they have borrowed the best elements of the currently popular PC CD-ROM adventures and have produced one of the best CD32 games yet. It might not be the sort of thing you will want to play for hours in a single sitting, but there's enough long-term interest to warrant its purchase and will provide plenty of fun.

And if Commodore are looking for a product which will show off the CD32 to prospective customers, then Litil Divil could be the ideal solution.

AMIGA GOLD AWARD

# system analysis



**Deep in the heart of rainy Manchester is a ray of sunshine in the form of one of England's top software houses. Tina Hackett sails across the Ship Canal and meets Ocean Software**

# A life on

"Tall oaks from little acorns grow", as they say, and although an old cliché, this certainly rings true in the case of Manchester-based software house, Ocean. The story begins with the tale of two entrepreneurs with a vision, a vision to move into an emerging market of home entertainment.

And the rest is history, but it was obviously a decision that has paid off for the two entrepreneurs, Chairman, David Ward and Managing Director, Jon Woods, as they lead Ocean Software into its second decade.

Starting in 1983 with only four staff, it has now grown into one of the largest independent software houses in the World. In 1987 they expanded into the French market, setting up Ocean France on the outskirts of Paris, and only two years later their rapid development was increased further still with the setting up of Ocean US in San Jose, California.

Ocean's foresight into the industry meant that they pushed the market forward in areas such as licensed games, and the release of their budget label, 'Hit Squad', in 1989 opened another market for budget software which as well as the top Ocean titles, also includes products from the likes of Electronic Arts, Domark, Accolade and Virgin.

## RELEASES

In 1983 Ocean licensed its first coin-operated game and two years later they released their first movie-based game – a move which has led to the company being renowned for its licensed titles, including licenses from seven of the largest eight Hollywood studios.

Ocean now has titles licensed by big names such as 'Rambo', 'The Terminator', 'Batman' 'The Addams Family' and more recently, the industry's first million dollar license when they signed to produce 'Jurassic Park'.

As well as its film licenses, Ocean signed advertising tie-ins including that with Walkers Crisps and Quavers, resulting in their platformers Pushover and One Step Beyond.

Ocean has also incorporated the charity aspect into the games with the release of Sleepwalker, which used the voice of comedian Lenny Henry, and raised a considerable sum for Comic Relief.

The company has employed the talents of pop giants such as Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Utah Saints and Alien Sex Fiend in their releases.

Utah Saints worked on their track 'I want you', for Ocean/ID's game, Burning Rubber, while Nik and Mrs Fiend (Alien Sex Fiend) composed the sound track for Inferno.

Ocean's development centre in Manchester has over 100 specialists on site, with another 25 in San Jose, and also have top name developers such as D.I.D. working for them.

As well as the Amiga, Ocean has produced software for many other platforms including those by Sinclair, Atari, and Amstrad, along with the IBM compatible PC.

So next time you're considering the merits of what Manchester has to offer while supping your Boddingtons and watching Coronation Street, think that in the unlikely setting of a large city in the North West of England is one of Europe's top software houses.

## Ocean history..

**1983:** Humble Beginnings – Jon Wo… and David Ward form Ocean Softw… Limited and their first coin-op game … licensed

**1984:** Ocean release their first seq… game 'Kong Strikes Back'

**1985:** The man of muscle Sylvest… Stallone and Ocean tie-in with their fi… film license, Rambo, "First Blood"

**1986:** Ocean's first 16-bit game relea… 'Eco' appears

**1987:** Bonjour France, as Ocean expa… across the continent with the opening … Ocean Paris.

**1989:** Ocean go down a real 'hit' wi… their budget label "Hit Squad".

**1990:** Ocean dig deep with their cha… release, Sleepwalker for Comic Relief.

**1991:** "Do they know it's Christma… time?" Ocean did with their products … one, two and three in the Christma… charts.

**1992:** Ocean move to their curre… Castlefield headquarters.

**1993:** They celebrate their Tenth annive… sary and make the Jurassic Park deal.

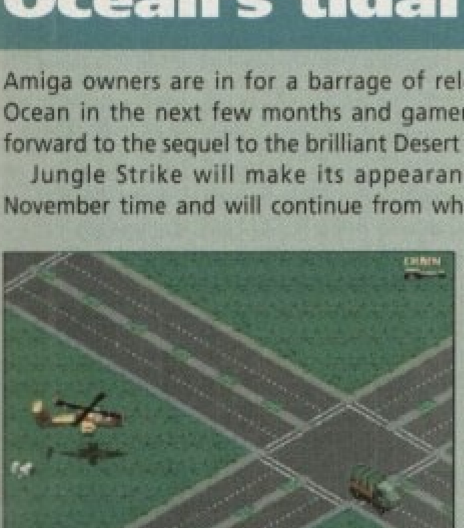


*Developed by Magnetic Fields, Kid Chaos makes a refreshing change to the usual platformer offerings*

## Ocean's tidal wave

Amiga owners are in for a barrage of releases from Ocean in the next few months and gamers can look forward to the sequel to the brilliant Desert Strike.

Jungle Strike will make its appearance around November time and will continue from where its predecessor left off with the madman's son, Kilbaba Jr, continuing his Father's reign of terror over a jungle scenario.



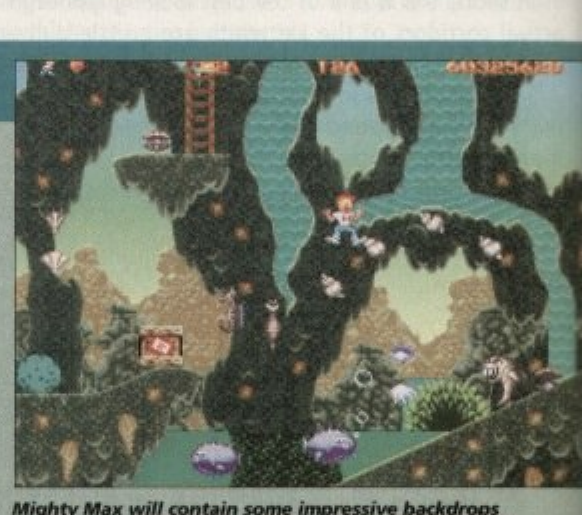
*Jungle Strike has a lot to be worked on yet, but it looks as if it will be a fitting successor to Desert Strike*

He is assisted by the South American Drug Lord, Carlos Ortega, and it is your job to complete the nine campaigns to defeat them.

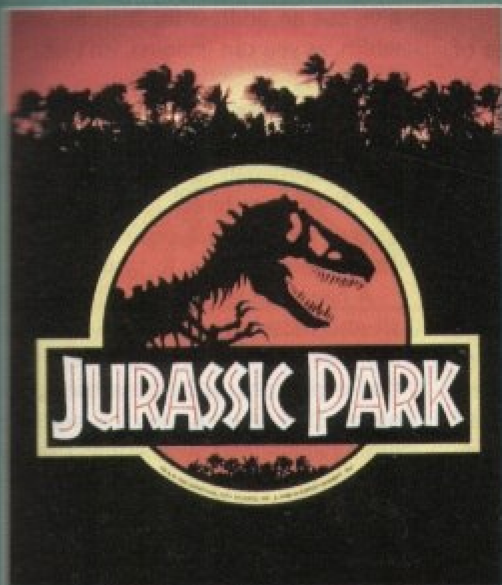
Also in production is Mutant League Hockey which follows the same rules as Hockey – getting the puck in the back of the net scores a goal – but apart from that it's a case of foul play wins the game, and you'll have to find a gory end to your opponents existence! Axes, sticks of dynamites and the like are available to use.

Ocean will be bringing out another platformer, Mighty Max, and if it is up to the same standards as Kid Chaos then the platform genre will definitely undergo a change of image!

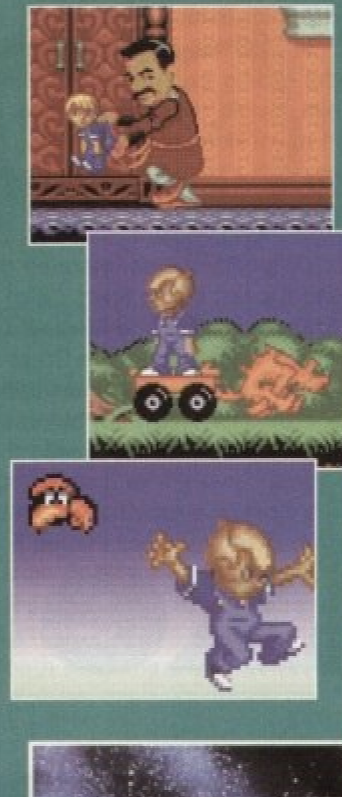
Colourful locations and a cartoony feel will make this a fun escapade as you play Max or his friends against the evil Skullmaster – the bad guy who is trying to build a weapon powerful enough to destroy the world. The weapons are hidden in separate locations



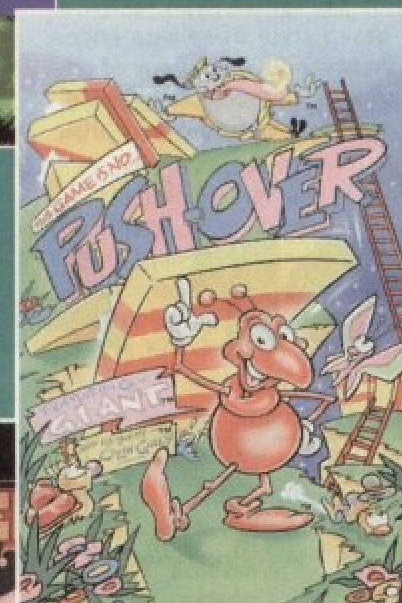
*Mighty Max will contain some impressive backdrops*



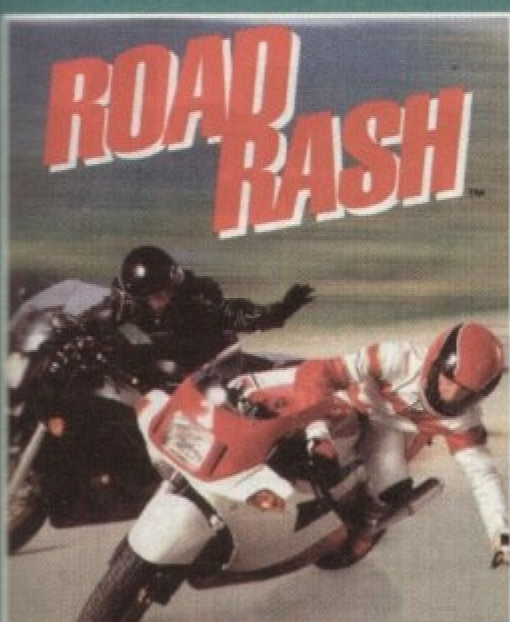

The industry's first million dollar license when Ocean signed to produce the game



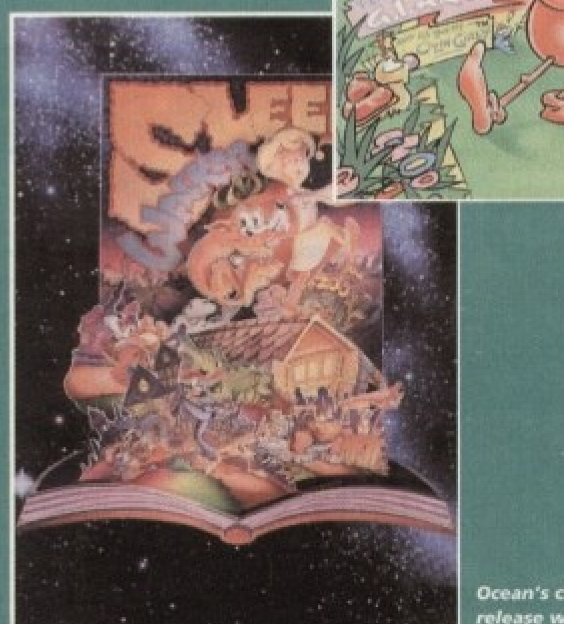

Cartoon capers make it to the computer game




The advertising tie-in with Quavers appeared in Pushover




Ocean's budget label, Hit Squad has released some classic games from top developers



Ocean's charity release was a huge hit

## A drop in the Ocean...

**Over ten years in the business and Ocean have a softography of Amiga games to be proud of. We take a look at some of their finest.**

- **Kid Chaos** – Ocean's recent platformer developed by Magnetic Fields, stunned with its gorgeous graphics and fun gameplay.
- **Rainbow Islands** – classic platformer sequel to Bubble Bobble which involved throwing rainbows at baddies!
- **Parasol Stars** – the sequel to Rainbow Islands. Similar to Bubble Bobble in that the two-player mode adds to the fun.
- **New Zealand Story** – platformer action that is both highly playable and addictive.
- **Bart vs. the Space Mutants** – cartoon style gameplay as the rogue himself, Bart Simpson.
- **Robocop 3** – fun arcade adventure with the film license tie-in.
- **The Addams Family** – platformer with nice animations of the film's main characters.
- **Pushover** – Quavers advertising license which involved an ant!
- **Jurassic Park** – huge film licensed game that managed to conjure the atmosphere of the film well.

# the Ocean waves

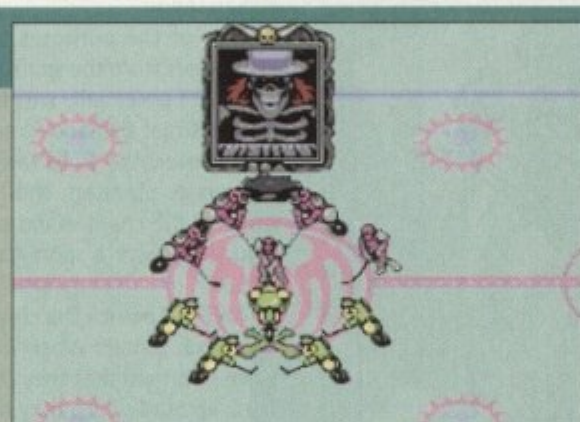
and you will have to find them. Games players partial to the occasional round of Golf will be treated to PGA European Tour, courtesy of Ocean and American publisher EA Sports.

You can play over five top-ranking European courses, including Wentworth and Valderrama, and in real European tournaments such as the Volvo PGA Championship and Canon European Masters.

New features include the one-four player sudden-death shoot-outs and improved wind and weather conditions that effect the flight and roll of your ball.

Shaq-Fu is also set for release before Christmas and is a fighting game starring the NBA star, Shaquille O' Neal. You take on a number of opponents who are servants of an evil warlord and each have their own different fighting moves and power moves.

Tournament mode is available for one or two players



*Mutant League Hockey will add a new twist to the game – in other words, massacre your opponents!*

and you will be able to choose to be any of the eight fighters. Locations will include everything from a Hindu Temple to a laboratory!

Racing roller-blade style is the order of the day in Skitchin'. The idea is to get across the finish line in the fastest possible time, finishing in the first four – even if it is by some dubious means!

Eliminate the other Skitchers with elbows, fists or even crowbars, and hitch a ride on passing cars. There are 12 stages to complete, based in major US cities, from Denver to Los Angeles.

Flight sim fans can grab a copy of D.I.D's and Ocean's TFX this Autumn. You'll have the opportunity to fly some of the world's most advanced military aircraft such as F117a Stealth Bomber, the Lockheed F22 Superstar or the Eurofighter 2000.

With all these play options it will allow the game to be an arcade flight game, realistic flight simulator and 3D aerial adventure. The game will involve "Real World" scenarios and over 120 multiple objective missions.

# Master Axe - The genesis

system analysis



**Last month we looked at Millennium's forthcoming game based around the true story of four martial arts experts . This week Tina Hackett talks to the inspiration behind the game, Neil Axe.**

Originality is not usually a thing synonymous with computer games these days, so when Millennium announced that they intended to bring out a game based on a true story it was met with a mixture of cynicism and hope!

But on hearing the tale behind the game, it's not hard to see why Millennium saw potential in a story that makes reality seem like fantasy.

The game is Myster X, the story is of four martial arts champs who cycle around 4000 miles across the states, sparring in various towns. And talking to the team leader and the man who originally came up with the idea for the game, it's obvious that this release is going to be more than a bit special.

A man highly suited to his current role supervising a martial arts sim, 29-year old Neil Axe has spent around 20 years training in the arts and has an extensive and most impressive list of achievements in this field.

Starting at the age of five, under the tuition of his father, Neil learnt a Karate-based style of self-defence. Moving on to various other forms of oriental disciplines including Kick Boxing, Wing Chun Kung Fu and Atemi Jutsu Karate, Neil became somewhat of a champion in his chosen sport.

In 1988 Neil came up with the idea of the cycling expedition. A team, led by him, would cycle the distance, sparring in towns along the way, ending the journey with a huge tournament.

## RITUAL

Originally it was intended that Neil and the rest of the team, Julian Carlino, Graham Cradle, and Michael Graham, would travel along the Great Wall of China, a ritual which goes back to the ancient martial artists, but restrictions with the authorities meant that they could not actually cycle along certain parts of the wall and it was called off only weeks before they were due to go.

Determined that all their intense training and 18 months preparation should not go to waste, it was suggested that the team should cycle across America instead, but this would almost double the distance meaning cycling nearly an extra 2000 miles.

Many, including medical experts, believed the guys from Bucks were mad to take on such a feat, especially as two of the team have health disabilities – Neil suffers nerve damage in his lower spine while Julian needs surgical braces to even walk properly.

Setting off from New York deliberately close to April Fools Day (everyone believing them to be fools), they began their arduous journey across the States to San Diego.

One of the purposes of the expedition, apart from the spiritual objective to find ones inner self, was to raise money for the Great Ormand Street hospital.

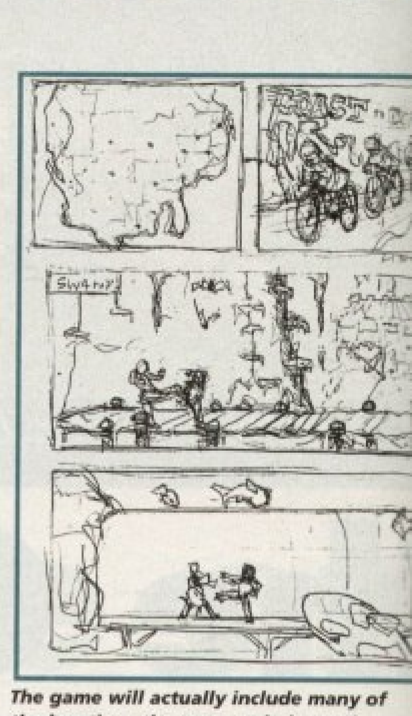
However, the fund raising aspect did not go as planned. Neil believes that some of the charities did not want to be associated with a sport that was of this nature.

And in America the charity side didn't fair much better. When over there they were informed that they couldn't open a bank account which they had planned to keep money raised in, and while publicity was good in one sense, it also meant that they were easily recognisable by gangs intending to roll them for the money.

The team had to be on their guard the whole time. Instead of collecting the money as they went along, they had t give out an address for it to be sent t which, as you can imagine, isn't nearly a effective.

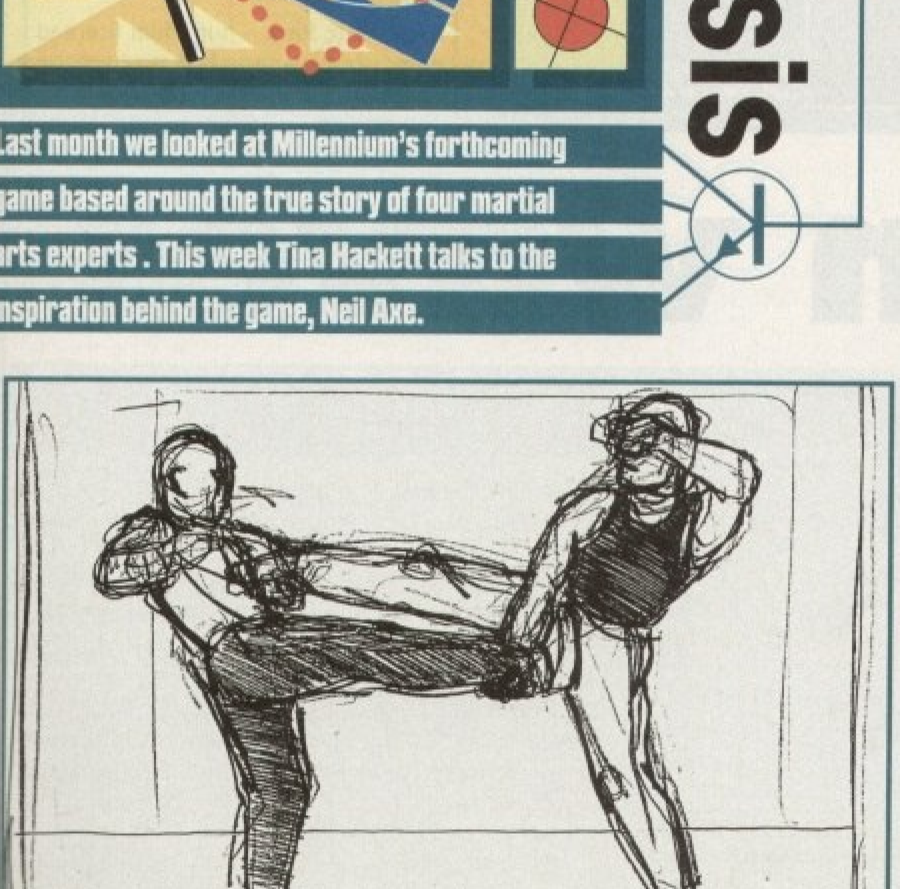
At first it was intended that the who team would cycle the entire distanc but Julian began to suffer with his ba leg. A van was hired, leaving the tea severely strapped for cash, with only $1 a day between them.

A new plan was decided. They woul all alternate between driving, naviga ing, sleeping and cycling except whe the temperatures became too low a night. This way one person would b cycling at all times. And as if all the phy



*The game will actually include many of the locations the team cycled round*





*The moves are going to be as authentic as possible and Neil has worked closely with Millenium to make sure it stays realistic*



Preliminary sketches of the four cyclists and soon-to-be game sprites

ical trauma of the journey wasn't enough to cope with, the route took them through some of the most notorious neighbourhoods in America and brought them up against racial hatred to the extent where their lives became threatened.

In Yeso, New Mexico, a major "red neck" area, the Ku Klux Klan took offence at the fact that white men would fraternise with a black and actually threatened the team with death.

The hostile weather conditions they came across, such as the sand storms in the dessert, made things even more difficult, and despite trying to navigate the route from 7-11 stores, 32 days after their departure the team made it – against all the odds.

A month after the crew had set out the journey was over. They completed the ride by crossing over into California on May 6th, 1988.

But the celebrations came to a tragic end when Kay Baxter, a close friend and girlfriend of their host, died in a car accident in which Neil was passenger.

This affected him immensely and although he only received minor injuries he suffered deep shock. Neil has dedicated the game and the script to her memory.

And it's this story of their epic journey that is making its way into a computer game. But why choose this medium of all means?

Well firstly, Neil sees the computer as the most modern way to convey such a tale, but it's not the only outlet for his story. On their return, Neil and Julian worked on a script that combines fact with some fiction which they're hoping will be made into a film.

Neil is very enthusiastic about the forthcoming game and describes it as a "Martial Arts simulation" rather than a beat-'em-up. Neil has spent a great deal of time with Millennium, making sure the moves in the game will stick to those humanly possible – and if they're not realistic, they go.

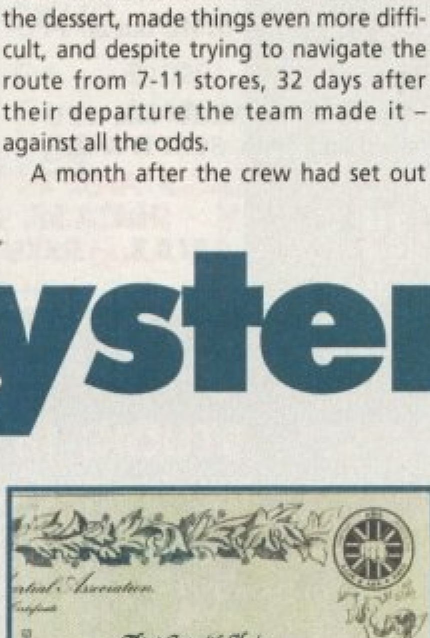
The game will also incorporate the places they went to and some of the actual people they met. Millennium have taken these real characters, for example the policeman they saw on the trip, and spiced them up a bit!

As to the future and whether there are plans for any more trips, Neil points out that with all the current projects in production, time is restricted, especially considering the extensive training involved. But it's an experience he says he wouldn't have missed for the world and would consider undertaking again.

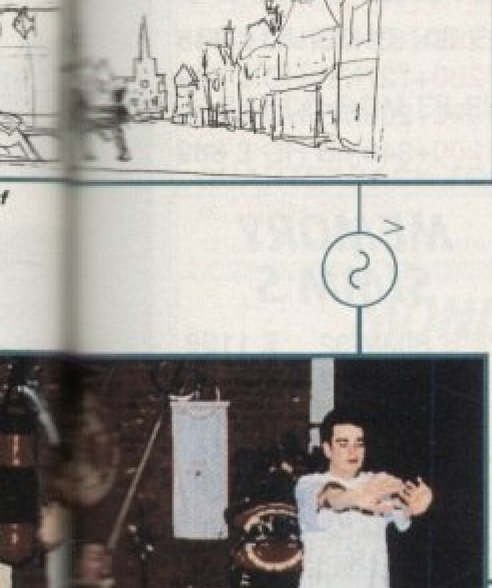
The cycle ride also led to an invitation for Neil to lead a team over to Las Vegas a year later for a prestigious tournament. The British team took many of the awards, including first place in a Heavyweight Sparring Men's Black Belt, to second and third in Men's Intermediate Sparring. Neil himself also received a "Spiritual Warrior" award for services to the martial arts.

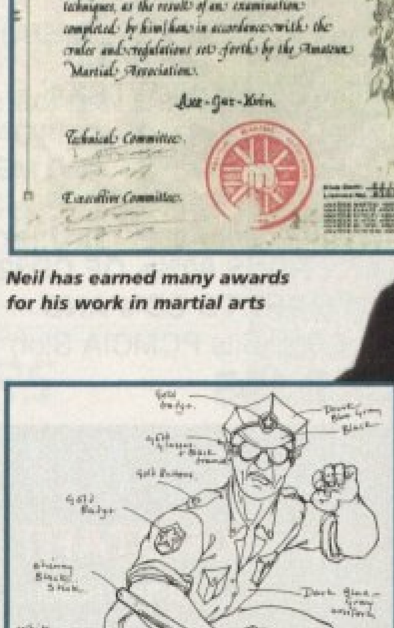
# ...s of Myster X






Neil has earned many awards for his work in martial arts





Real life characters, such as the policeman they met, add an authentic touch



Neil Axe – team leader and games advisor

## STUDIO

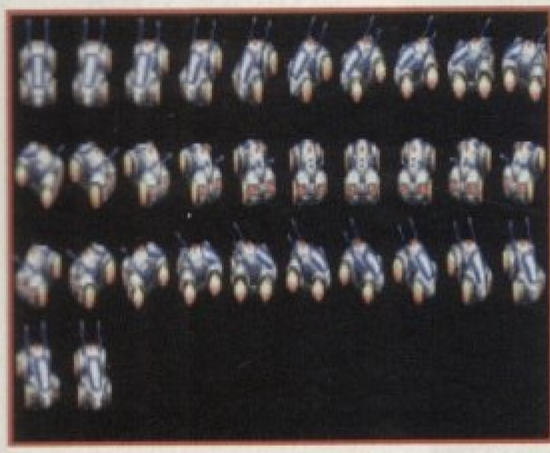
Neil's studio is based in Aylesbury, Bucks and houses the Axe Gar Kuin, which is the first full time martial arts centre to be funded by local government.

In 1989 the AGK academy played host to the International Martial Arts Goodwill Enterprises (IMAGE) Open Tournament and was attended by martial arts celebrities such as Ted Tabura and Peter Kwong (famous for his roles in The Golden Child and Big Trouble in Little China).

On the academy's emblem is Neil's motto, "Never in Anger will you find honour" and it is this belief that he instils into his students and the attitude that although you can learn to defend yourself, the true art is to condition the mind and focus on four aspects that must remain foremost in your life. These are work, discipline, control and dedication.

Myster X is not about violence. It is about these disciplines and aims to give the player an insight into the world of martial arts, rather than the usual approach of this genre to make the game as gory and blood thirsty as possible.

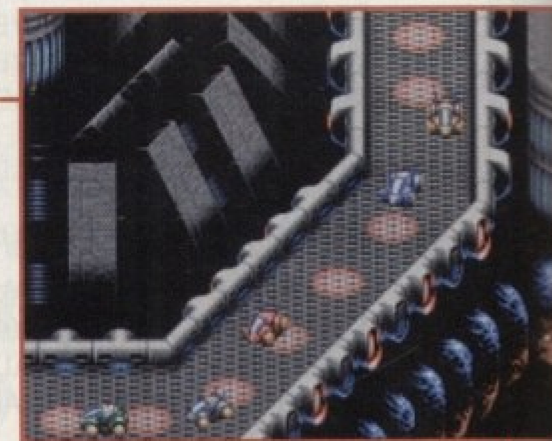
It is certainly different to talk to a real live computer sprite and it is refreshing to hear of a game that has more of an intelligent, as well as original, approach. Look forward to the game around November time.



The cars themselves will feature many frames of animation so that they move smoothly and realistically

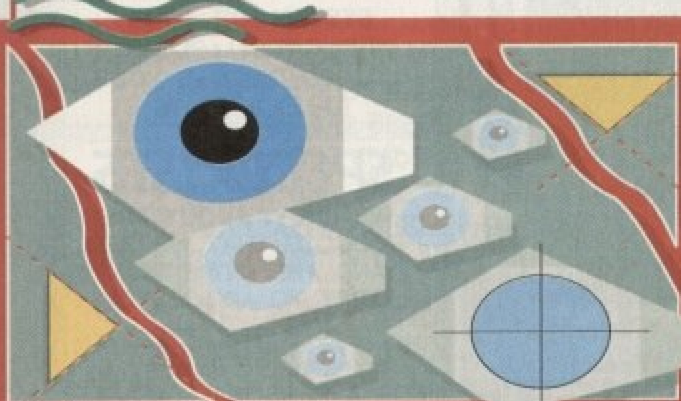


There's no reason to let a little snow hamper the proceedings, it makes things more interesting



A novel setting for overhead races is the space age terrain, with its own set of hazards

# system preview



**Dave Cusick pits himself and his vehicle against some hell-for-leather drivers, and then when he gets to the office takes a look at this promising new driving game**

From across the crowded room I saw her. She was partially obscured by the throng of drooling admirers, but from the brief glimpses I could catch, I could see she was a stunner. I could barely wait to thrust the contents of my pocket into her inviting slot.

No, you haven't mistaken a steamy thriller for your copy of *Amiga Computing* and I apologise for lowering the tone of the whole magazine.

You've just been reliving my first encounter with one of the most enjoyable coin-ops ever created, Super Sprint. It inevitably spawned a computer conversion, and since then countless imitators have appeared, trying to recapture the high speed thrills and spills of that three-wheeled classic.

Team 17 themselves have already ventured into the overhead driving game genre with the stylish Overdrive. To be honest, this was probably the least well received of all Team 17's productions.

It seemed to lack a certain indefinable something, and it definitely missed a conventional non-modem-link two-player mode. All Terrain Racing, however, promises much more excitement with a whole host of impressive specifications.

It is being developed by a two man team with a successful pedigree. Jamie Woodhouse, responsible for the coding, was previously involved in the production of Nitro and Qwak.

Graphics are being created by Danny Burke, who worked on the visually stunning Body Blows games. It's being written using the SNASM 2 development system, with Deluxe Paint and LightWave involved in the graphical production process.

This collaboration is perhaps a little unusual considering the pair live approximately two hundred miles apart. Danny lives in London while Jamie is from Yorkshire.

They telephone each other regularly to discuss the game's progress, but surprisingly they don't have modems for sending data to one another. Instead they survive using that tried and tested pre-information highway method of transferring files – sticking floppy disks in the post. Despite the physical distance between the two men, they both have similar hopes for the finished game. Although this is the first time that Jamie and Danny have worked together, Alan Bunker, media manager for Team 17, is equally confident that they will produce the goods.

"ATR is the next progressive step from Overdrive," he confidently proclaims. "The game runs smoothly in all directions, the speed is fast and the pick-ups and weapons work beautifully.



The peace of the calm and tranquil forest is shattered as the racers tear around another track with scant disregard for the countryside code

"ATR has been in development for six months, in which time the game has steadily taken shape. We have no doubt that ATR will be well received – in particular the two-player mode is thrill-a-second stuff and really fun and frantic."

If one player drops too far behind the other, he'll get dragged along but will incur a time penalty. The player with the best time at the end of the race is the victor.

## DEFINITIVE

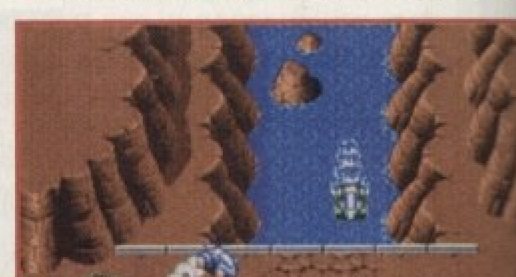
Indeed, the list of features which will be present in the finished product suggests that ATR could well become the definitive game of its type.

In the one player game, five artificially intelligent computer cars are involved in each race, and for added clarity each car is coloured differently.

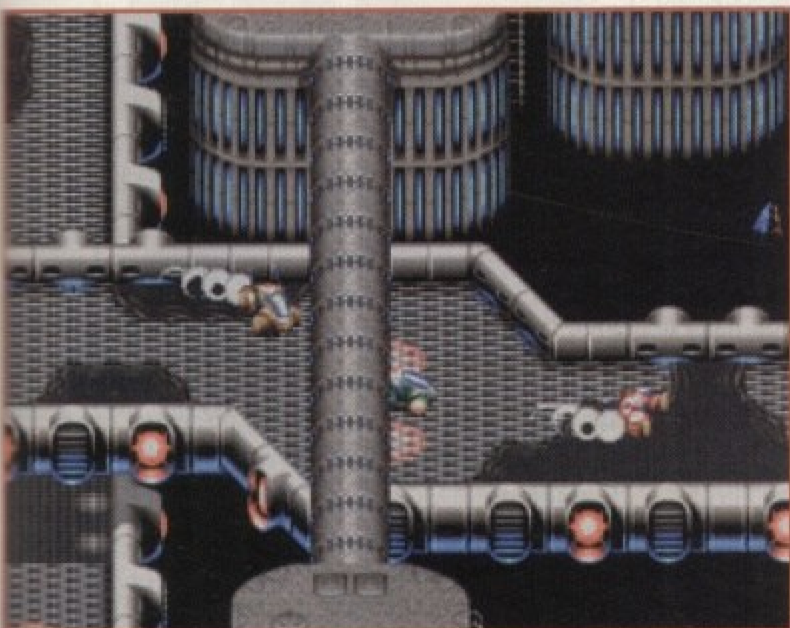
The player can upgrade his or her car in terms of steering, tyres and acceleration and so on. There are three standard types of vehicle on offer, each with its



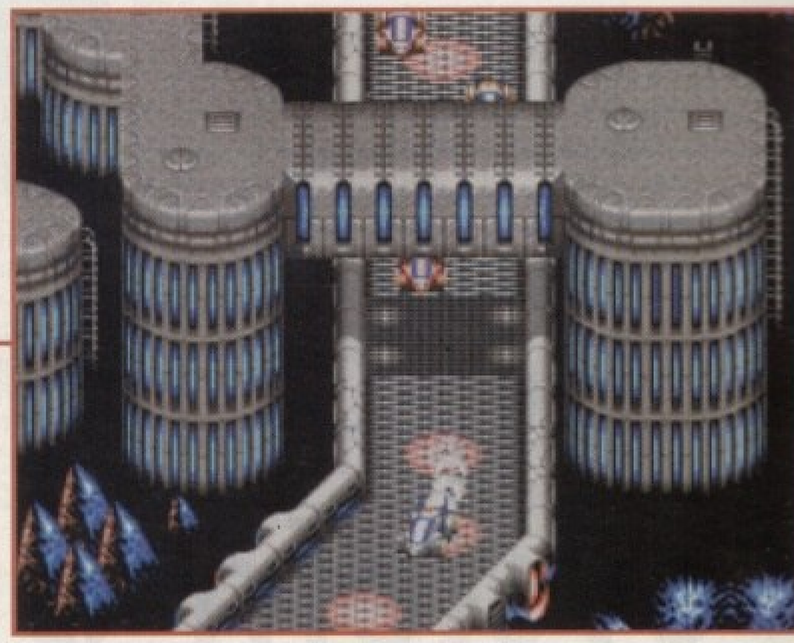
Hang on, there's no road. Public spending cuts start to bite in the world of ATR



Inevitably ATR will be compared with Micro Machines and Skidmarks. But will ATR live up to the challenge?



ATR brings a new meaning to the space race. This is just one of six terrain types which Team 17 plan to include in the finished version



Despite having six cars on screen for a good deal of the time, the programmers say there'll be no slow down

# All Terrain Racing

own unique abilities and handling characteristics, from the four wheel drive truck thingy to the nippy space-age car.

There are 36 different tracks in the circuit race mode alone, in six different types of terrain including forest, rocky canyons and even space. Tracks include such hazards as bridges, tunnels, ramps, jumps, moving barriers and short cuts, to name but a few.

Various collectable bonuses are littered around the track which improve traction or top speed, or arm your vehicle with weapons such as homing missiles so that you can quickly dispose of troublesome adversaries in a similar manner to that of the aging SuperCars games.

Jamie says that: "with ATR, I want to make it so you identify with what's on screen. You know – if you have a rocky track, you feel as if the car's going over rocks; if it's a snowy track, you're losing control of the car."

He's promising the sort of interaction that he feels was the missing ingredient in Overdrive. Danny agrees: "We want to make it feel as if you're actually on the track."

Danny and Jamie intend to include everything that could be hoped for in a driving game. Adds Danny: "I don't want to look back at the game and realise what we could have put in."

Modestly described in the press release as "the growling beast we've all been waiting for", ATR looks as though it will reach the usual high standards of Team 17 software, being polished and playable in the extreme.

To experience ATR you'll need a 1 Meg machine, but Jamie and Danny are confident that even on an A500 the game will be smooth and slick.

It's due out in October, with an enhanced A1200 version promised for release in November which may include graphical enhancements such as parallax scrolling. A CD32 version is also in the pipeline, which will no doubt feature an animated introduction sequence of some description, along with an improved soundtrack.

If it can match Skidmarks and other such titles in terms of sheer addictiveness, then there's no doubt that Team 17 will have yet another highly successful product on their hands.



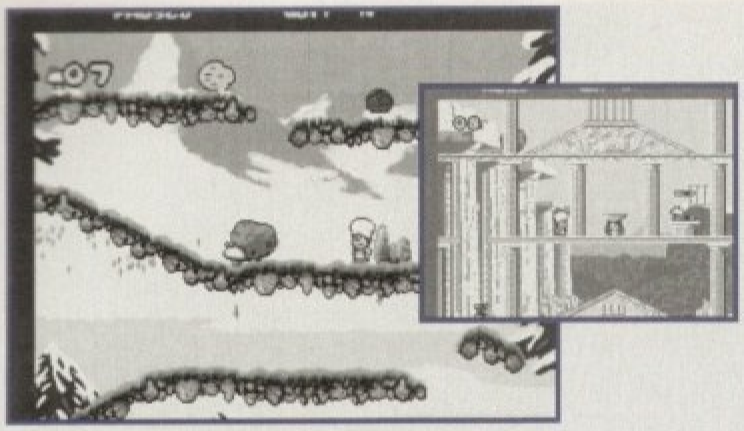
*Brimming over with neat graphical touches, this will definitely be one to watch out for this autumn*



*If driving through streams at high speeds is your idea of a good time then ATR will be right up your dirt track*



*The men responsible for bringing ATR to a monitor near you: Jamie Woodhouse and Danny Burke*



## Out to Lunch

French stereotypes a-plenty as top chef, Pierre goes on the trail of his missing ingredients. He's one vegetable short of a casserole, so to speak, and you have to guide Pierre around the six different countries and recover his escaped edibles.

Making life difficult is Le Chef Noir, Pierre's arch-rival, and he will do everything he can to release all the food you have managed to capture.

And what else must every good chef watch out for? Why, bacteria, of course! Bacteria and insects will try and infect the food, so you must stop them before they reach and rot your farm fresh consumables.

To help you there are collectibles that will prove more than valuable. The most essential of these is the net that you use to capture the food in to carry them to the cage.

A minimum number of ingredients must be collected to reach the next level in a given time limit.

This time limit really does add some excitement (and frustration) to what is simply a very ordinary, though very competent platformer.

The bonus level provides some variety which takes the form of Pierre wandering around a supermarket collecting fruit, but it isn't all that spectacular or imaginative by any means.

Graphically, it doesn't differ much from the A1200 version but sound-wise it really has been well enhanced. Springs boing and the baddies whinge to create some humorous sound effects.

Out to Lunch is quite a fun title for a while, especially for a Monday morning/Friday afternoon because it doesn't require any thought or real effort.

The difficulty lies in having to jump across slidy platforms and collect the food in time, but it's hardly demanding or particularly original. It's nicely done but at the end of the day it's only a variation on an overused idea.

The password system would have been useful if it was given after every level, but unfortunately you only receive one after an entire world which becomes very irritating, and the levels have to be repeated a great deal.

If you're desperate for another platformer to add to your collection then by all means buy it – it's not that it is a bad game, just not a very original one!

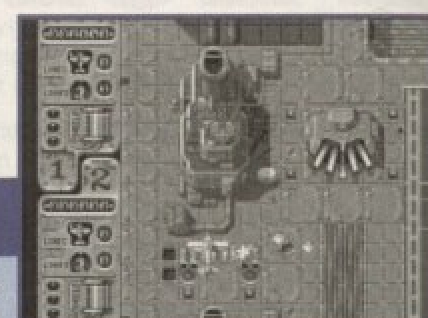
**45%**

- Publisher: Mindscape
- Developer: In-house
- Disks: 1 CD
- Price: £35.99
- Genre: Platformer
- Hard disk install: N/A
- Control system: Joypad
- Supports: CD32
- Recommended: N/A

# system essentials



**This month Tina Hackett sees what's on the menu with Mindscape's latest and dons her flying jacket to take off with Core Design's CD offering.**



## Banshee

Fancy being a super hero? Then take the part of Sven Svardensvart and save the Styx Empire from bad guy Blardax Maldrear. With only your trusty flying machine, the 'Banshee', you have to stop Maldrear from taking over the world.

Courtesy of Core Design, you can now get this shoot-'em-up of the century for the CD32. Scoring a deserved 89% (AMC76) for the A1200 version, it has now been ported over for all CD32 blood fest fans to get their mitts on.

It's a vertical shoot-'em-up and although there is nothing particularly new about it, this is a prime example of the genre.

The scenario changes frequently, flying across different terrains and meeting increasingly challenging enemies. As ace pilot of this power-propped plane, you must blast the enemies and avoid their bullets.

And ok, so maybe it's not the most politically correct of games but after all that is all it is... a game. However, if you're the type who finds blasting people to bits a little sick, whether in a comical style or not, then steer clear – though you'd be missing out on one brilliant title.

The two-player mode is a nice touch and you get the choice whether to split the power-ups or not – ideal if your friend is the bonus-hogging type! The three levels of difficulty also add to the challenge.

Graphically it is amazing. It's viewed from a top-down perspective with the ground below constantly changing to many different landscapes. One minute you're flying across the deep blue ocean, the next the Arctic Wastes. Most of the time you are rather pre-occupied with blasting baddies but when you do actually spot all the little details, you realise how wonderful the graphics really are.

This is a terrific title loaded with atmosphere, packed full of objectives to complete and millions of baddies to kill. Sound effects add realism and all the bombing going off left, right and centre makes for a real feast of pure shoot-'em-up heaven.

**88%**

- Publisher: Core Design
- Developer: In-house
- Disks: 1 CD
- Price: £34.99
- Genre: Shoot-'em-up
- Hard disk install: N/A
- Control System: Joypad/Mouse
- Supports: CD32
- Recommended: N/A

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## UTILITIES

U281 MAGNUM 1.7 Very popular disk magazine creator.
U259 KICKSTART 1.3 Allows A1200/A600 to run A500 software that wouldn't normally run.
U265 TELESCROLL VIDEO TITLER Wipes, fades, scrolls text etc.
U256 D-COPY 3.1 Very powerful disk copier/formatter.
U209 TEXT ENGINE 4.1 The best PD word processor!
U282 VMORPH Excellent utl. allows morph/warp animation.
U277 POOLS PREDITOR.
U264 AMIPUNT Racehorse - predict winner!
U222 VIRUS CHECKER 6.41.
U283 SPIDERSOFT UTILITIES Garden designing utils.
U266 600 BUSINESS LETTERS Letters professionally done for all occasions ready to go.
U284 MING-SHU CHINESE ASTROLOG Create horoscopes in seconds.
U285-7 A64 v3.0 (3) Latest CBM64 emulator with a disk full of utilities.
U288 RE-ORG v3.11.
U267 FRENCH VOCAB Get to grips with the language with this excellent disk.
U289 SUPERDARK (WB2+) Great screen blankers!
U290 RELOKICK 1.4 Excellent degrader for A600/1200s.
U291 AMIGAFAX 1.34 Good fax software.
U270 FORMS UNLIMITED Excellent forms/invoice designer + prints.
U269 INVOICE MASTER Brilliant for creating and printing invoices.
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U275 EASYCALC This excellent spreadsheet for A500.
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U263 LOCKPICK 2 Removes up to 450 game protections!
U069 MAGNETIC PAGES Great disk magazine creator.
U292 LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT For the pessimist.
U273 FREE COPY 1.8 Similar to Lock Pick 2.
U293 BBASE 3 Powerful database.
U219 EDWORD PRO 4 Excellent word processor.
U021 MENU MASTER 3 Excellent util. to make menus. Easy to use.
U295 DOC DUMP Compress text to print.
U294 PARBENCH Link up 2 Amigas to control/communicate.
U231 VIEWTEK 2 (WB2+) Great multi-viewer supports IFF, GIF, JPEG etc.
U241 PPSHOW 4 Excellent multiviewer (can view compressed files).
U313 UNDELETE Get back deleted files!
U296 MUSICBASE Excellent database. Edits include tracktime, running time, artist etc.
U297 SOCCER LEAGUE Footy database. Lots of statistics can be entered.
U298 THE ANIMATION CONSTRUCTION KIT
U299 ADVENTURE GAME CREATOR
U257 DISK SALVAGE 2 Fixes corrupt data.
U300 NCOMM 3 Latest version of very popular comms package.
U301 AMIGA FOR Great desktop publishing package.
U27 GRAPH PRO Create/draw graphs.
U302 NUMPAD Gives A600 a number pad.
U001 ULTIMATE ICON MAKER
U303 HARD DISK STACKER (WB2+) Increases up to 50% HD Space!
U279 PAY ADVICE Keeps tracks of N.I., tax, pay etc.
U066 M-CAD Computer Aid Design.
U304 MINIMORPH
U305 DART MACHINE Scorer.
U308 AZ SPELL Huge spell checker.
U105 CROSSWORD DESIGNER
U077 A-GENE Family tree.
U306 GUITAR TUNE
U315 BUSINESS CARD MAKER
U309 GRINGER Excellent gfx viewer.
U314 BON APPETIT Recipe database.
U163 WINEMAKER Great database!
U268 AMIBASE PRO 2 Excellent database package.
U280 TSMORPH 3 Latest morphing programs.
U221 LABEL MAKER
U244 ENVELOPE PRINTER
U307 X PASSWORD Protects disks.
U040 GHOST WRITER Put messages on back of disks easily.
U310 FAST INTRO MAKER (WB2+) Fantastic intro maker.
U057 DOPE INTRO MAKER Similar to the two above.
U110 203 UTILITIES Very varied!

## GAMES

G157 ORK ATTACK Drop rocks on Orks. Quite fun.
G147 EXTERNAL ROME. Great strategy game.
G024 LARN Excellent text adventure.
G167 CASH FRUIT Blummin' good fruit machine game.
G137 COIN DROP Great fruit machine.
G080 MEGABALL 2.1 A classic bat and ball (Arkanoid) game.
C148-9 HIGH OCTANE (2) Good overhead racing.
G124 DRAGON TILES Stunningly good, remove the tiles (Shanghai) game.
G170 CAPT. BONUS Good rip off of Prince of Persia.
G158 LOADSAMONEY Excellent fruit machine.
G161 MOIRA 5.4 Huge role playing game!
G159 QUIZ MASTER
G169 SUPER PACMAN The best version!
G010 WIZZY'S QUEST
G160 KLAWS THE CAT Very nice looking platformer.
G162 TOP OF THE LEAGUE Great footy management game.
G163 TOADA Very addictive frogger clone.
G164 WORLD DARTS CHAMPION Brilliant!
G166 DRIVING MANIACS Astounding 3D racing game!
G131 STRIKE Excellent 10-pin bowling game!
G165 DELUXE GALAGA
G151 HYPERDRIVE Great 1 or 2 players futuristic racing game.
G156 TETRIS PRO Possibly the best TETRIS clone.
G168 CUBULUS Maddening addictive puzzler.
G178 TRAILBLAZER Exact replica of the CBM64 classic!
G180 SCORCHED TANKS One of the best 1 on 1 blasters.
G152-3 STARBASE 13 (2) One of the best PDs around. Like Monkey Island (point 'n' click).
G181-2 18 HOLE GOLF (2) Great Golf game.
G130 G. PRIX MANAGER
G183 KUNG FU CHARLIE
G101 SCRABBLE
G018-9 STAR TREK (2)
G184 E-TYPE Great asteroidsy game.
G177 FLEUCH Thrust clone.
G145 PROKER Brill poker game.
G185 MONACO Excellent racing game.
G186 V-CHESS
G173 REVERSI 2 The best version.
G042 LCD GAMES 4 handheld games converted.
G187 POM POM GUNNER Op. Wolf style blaster.
G188 WAYNE'S WORLD PONG Lovely sound effects!
G189 WIBBLE...GIDDY Commercial quality!
G155 POPEYE Conversion of the CBM64 classic.
G129 CRICKET Simple but fun cricket game.
G144 DYNAMITE WARS 4 player clone of DYNABLASTAR! Excellent!
G128 DONKEY KONG Classic CBM64 conversion.
G059 HOLY GRAIL A classic text adventure game.
G190 BLACK DAWN Excellent D&D game. Highly rated in mags.
G191 AVATRIS 3 Player Tetris!
G192 BOX Text adventure from author of Life and Death.
G171 AZTEC CHALLENGE Excellent CBM64 conversion of one of my fares!
G193-4 TALISMAN (2) Huge icon driven adventure - 2Mb.
G125 CRAZY SUE 2 Excellent platforming game.
G195 RAID 4 Excellent! Like SWIV.
G035 WET BEAVER Tennis.
G009 CAVE RUNNER+ The best Boulder-dash clone!
G172 SUPER TWINTRIS One of the best 2 player Tetris games!
G109 SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE Overhead 4 player racing!
G078 LLAMATRON One of the best blasters! By Jeff Minter.
G106 EXTREME VIOLENCE Fun 2 player hunt and shoot.
G110 MEGASQUAD One of the best 1 on 1 blasters!
G150 METRO Train set game.
G079 DR. MARIO The classic clone of Tetris, with a twist.
G174 ACT OF WAR 1.4 Excellent strategy/shoot game. Like Laser Squad.
G175 C-ROBOTS Program robots to fight each other.
G075 DOWNHILL CHALLENGE Great skiing challenge.
G023 TOMTESPELLET Nice Speedball clone - not 1200.
G196 MONOPOLY
G143 DOODY
G197 ZULATORS! V. funny text adventure.
G037 JETMAN It's a Jetpac clone.
G123 SON OF BLAGGER Conversion of CBM64's classic platformer (identical).
G198-9 MR MEN OLYMPICS (2) An amazing sports game. Great for the kids.
G179 BOMB JACKY Good Bomb Jack type game.
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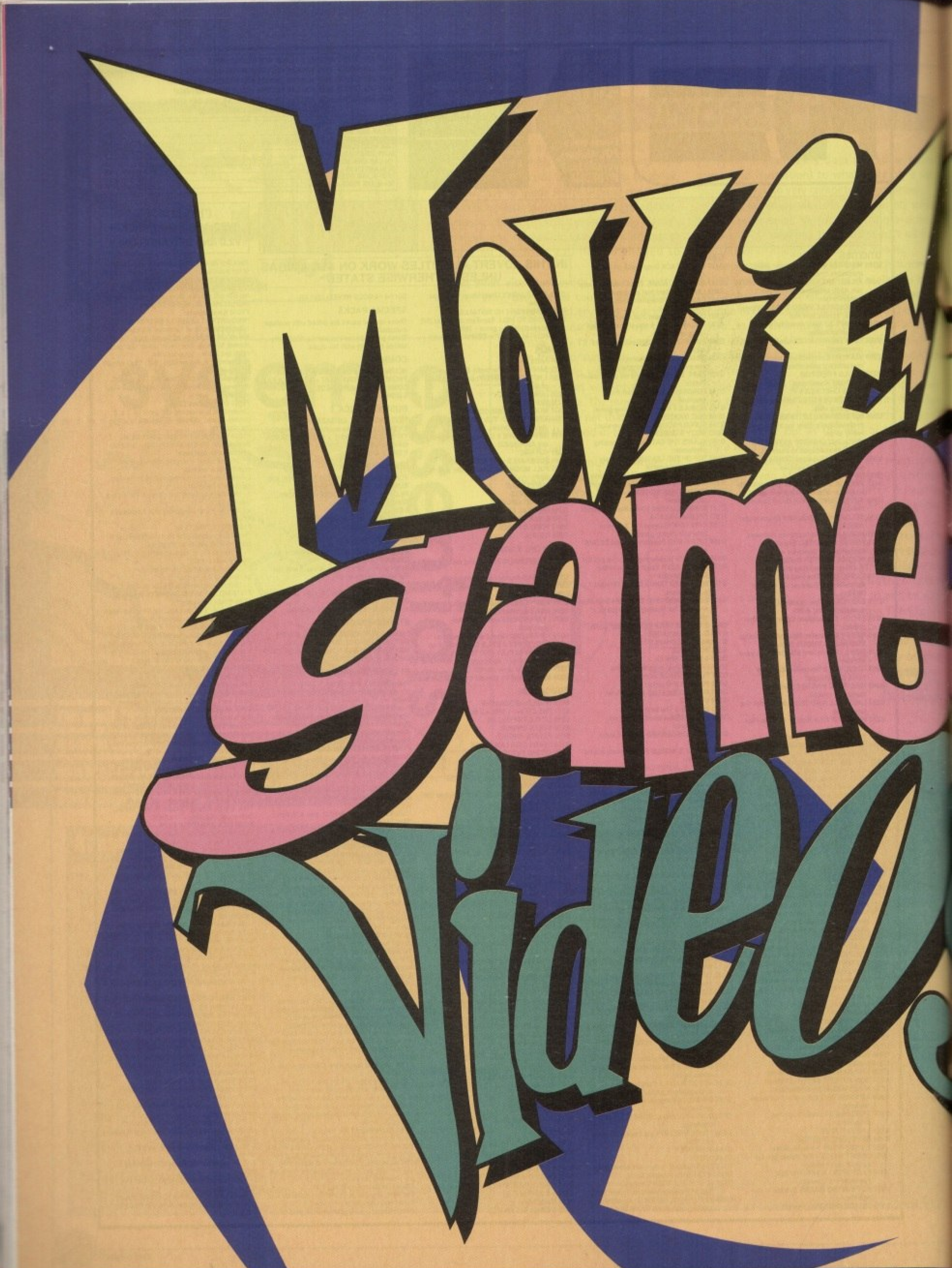
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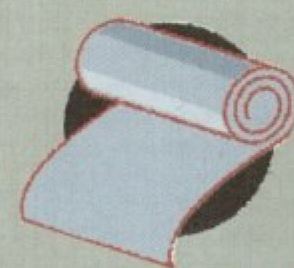
## Amos 147

Funky Phil fades into obscurity with the aid of his latest adventure into Amos



## Publishing 149

Yet more essential hints and tips on how to squeeze the very best from TypeSmith



## Scroller guide 135

Steve White explains how you can add special effects to your text creations



## Home video 132

In part four of Gary Whiteley's guide to home video, he lists all the do's and don'ts for the big day



## Classifieds 152

Buying, selling or just browsing, all the best Amiga bargains in our dedicated second-hand section

# Planning

## With your expertise in videoing you've been asked to film the 'big day'. Don't get confetti in your lens, get organised. Gary Whiteley shows you how

In this age of instant everything – instant mash, instant porridge, instant satisfaction and instant results – it's very tempting to forget the planning and just do it.

After all, videotape is cheap, and you can always cobble something together from whatever it is you've shot, right? Well, no, in fact. This is almost always entirely the wrong approach.

A good video production requires planning, strategy and organisation. If you're one of those haphazard folks who just turns up with a camcorder and starts hosepiping away at all and sundry, read on. If you're not, read on anyway, you might learn something.

The impetus for a successful shoot often begins in the planning stages. It is during this time that potential problems can be identified and, hopefully, solved, that shooting schedules are drawn up, storyboards consulted and all the loose ends drawn in before the expensive shooting actually takes place.

You might think that such planning is only necessary on big budget productions such as feature films and TV dramas, but you'd be wrong.

Every type of production, from holiday videos, weddings and birthdays to animation, commercials and features all need some degree of planning.

Obviously, the simpler the job, the simpler the planning but nevertheless, planning is an essential part of a video production, large or small.

Have I got the message across yet? Planning is important. ok?

How much planning you need to do depends on the production itself. For instance, if you're doing a home video for your child's birthday party then you should already be familiar with the layout of the location, where the best camera positions might be, how much light will be available at the time of day you will be shooting and where the power sockets, etc, are.

But most of the time you won't have a clue until you've been and eyeballed the gaff for yourself.

Full-scale film and TV production puts great emphasis on planning and organisation – they have to because such large projects commonly cost megabucks and involve many people and places.

Besides the talent (actors, actresses etc) there will be a substantial technical crew who handle everything from the camera and its accessories, the lighting, set dressing and props, art direction, carpentry, decorating, hair and makeup, wardrobe, catering, driving duties, location management and so on.

And then there are the directors (1st, 2nd, 3rd etc), the producer(s), and other occasional extra technicians and artistes brought in to carry out specific tasks.

All these people have to be in the right place at the right time, and ready to go when required. They have to be fed and watered, toilet facilities and transport to and from the location have to be provided as necessary.

All this takes organisation and planning, even on a day-to-day basis. Every member of the forthcoming day's shoot will receive a 'Call Sheet' at the end of the current day's shooting which details such things as how to get to tomorrow's location(s), where to park, what time the various cast and crew need to be on set, when the sun rises and sets, essential telephone numbers, which scenes are to be shot and where, and a selection of other pertinent data.

### DETAIL

Now, I'm not suggesting that planning your shoot necessarily needs this amount of detail – it all depends on the nature of the beast and how far you feel like taking it. But how do you start your planning and organising?

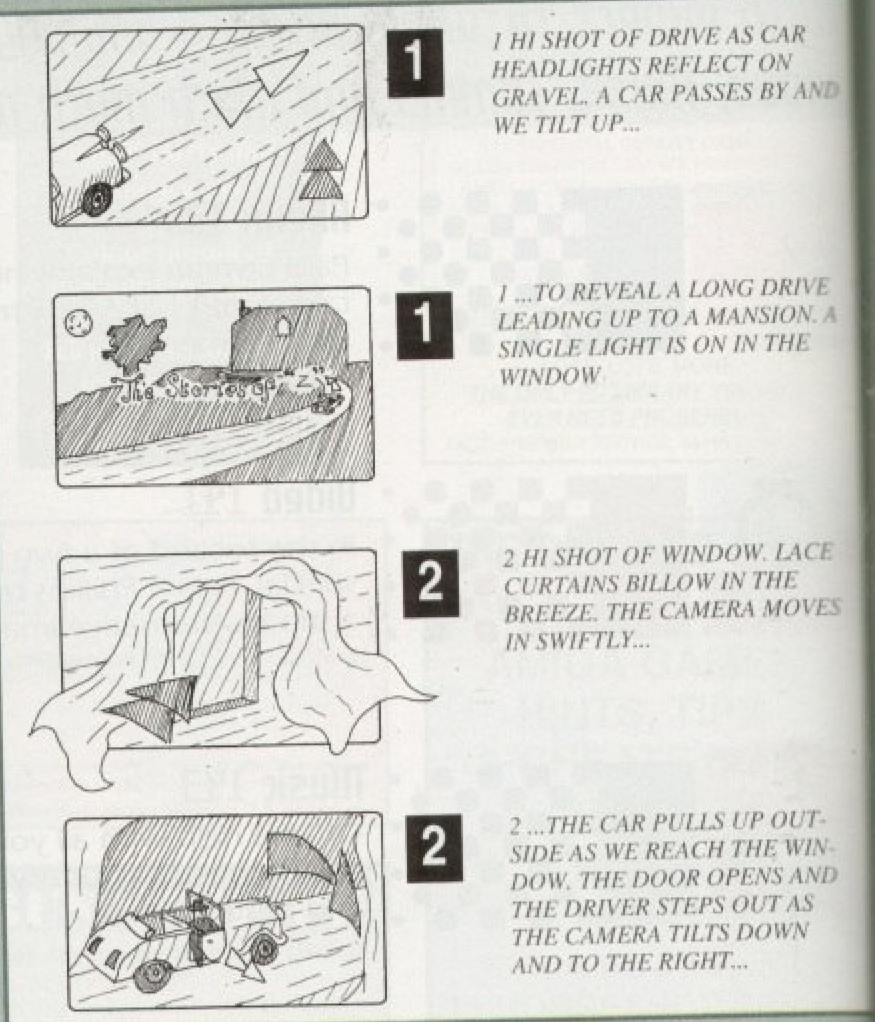
Let's take the example of a wedding video. The bride's family (who are paying for the shoot) have already told you the date, times and locations of the wedding and reception.

If you're smart, you'll start to wonder about such things as lighting levels, power supplies, camera angles and sound problems at each of the various locations you'll be visiting – which will probably also include attending the bride before she leaves for the ceremony, shooting the wedding through to the reception and the couple's eventual departure.

You'll need to check out each of the locations in advance if possible, and talk to their owners to ensure that it's OK to film, and that you can drape your various bits of production gear around the place.

Essential things to consider include such seemingly trivial items as where to park (so that you don't have to lug heavy equipment too far while rushing to the church), what the weather forecast for the happy day might be and how you'll cope if it does rain.

When you go to each location, try to get an idea of how the place will be laid out on the day you video the wedding – where the happy couple will take their vows, how they will enter and leave, and where you'll need to place




***Storyboarding is a vital element of any shoot whether it be the next James Cameron film or your friend's wedding to the lady next door***

lights, camera(s) and sound equipment to get the best chance of recording the ceremony and all its various dramas and subtleties.

For one-off live events like this it is much better to have as much knowledge as possible of what's likely to happen, and in what order, so that you catch everything important and don't get caught out by something you didn't know about.

At each location, make notes and diagrams to help you crystallise the information that you're gathering. Imagine where the sun (or light sources) will be at the time you will be shooting, find out where suitable power sockets are, look for camera positions you can use to get the various shots you'll need for the production.

Have the forethought to work out the flow of the day, how you get from A to B in the fastest, and safest, way. Decide whether you need extra help to move the kit around.

Wherever possible, make simple storyboards, lists, scripts or shot descriptions to help you cover everything in the most efficient way.

There's no substitute for planning and organisation, no matter how you do it. Remember that there's nothing worse for

## The nitty gritty

There are certain specifics that you'll need to consider carefully. Will the camera need a tripod or will you be going hand-held? Will you need a tripod and dolly to get any tracking shots?

Can you light the location successfully while keeping the atmosphere natural and informal? Will you need to close-mic the main action because of excessive traffic, aircraft, children or animal noise?

How long do you need to set up in each location? Will a second camera help secure those hard-to-get cutaways and establishing shots while the main action is being filmed.

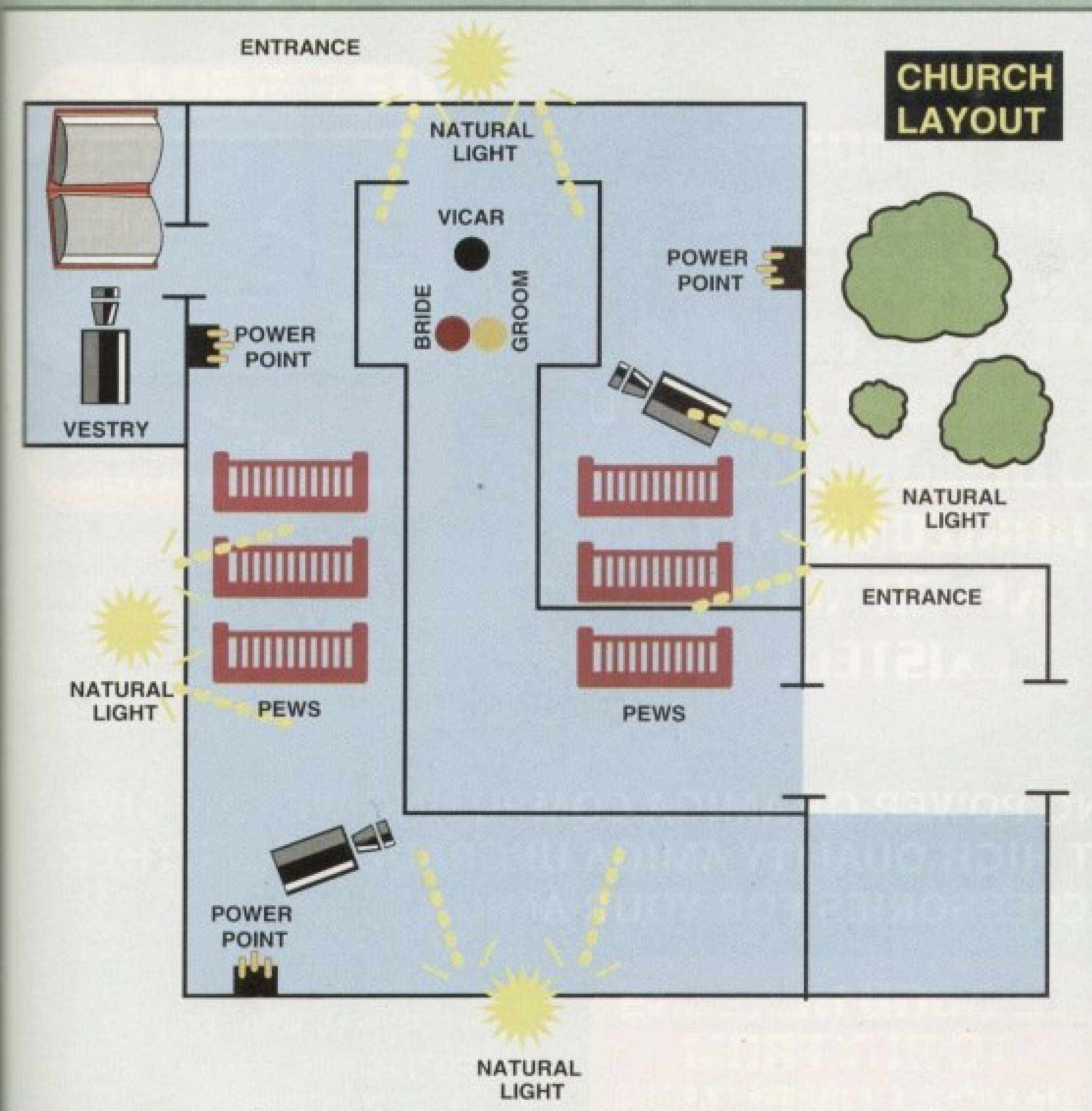
Live events don't usually offer much leeway for making mistakes and, unless you have the time – and an understanding minister – it is extremely unlikely that you'll get a second chance if you miss something important.

There's probably not much chance of getting the happy couple to go through the missing bits again, so you have to be on your toes right from the start, and to do this your planning and organisation will need to be almost military in its precision.

Of course, there will always be times when all your planning falls apart, but if you're clever, and nimble-minded, you'll be able to go with the flow and keep shooting, unphased by some unexpected departure from the schedule.

If you remember that Murphy's Law states that "Everything that can go wrong, will" then you should be prepared for anything.

# to perfection




*A layout map can help you remember small details such as power points, potential camera positions, natural light sources and if an extension lead will be needed. Don't forget to get permission to shoot in the vestry as the couple sign the register*

## Equipment checklist

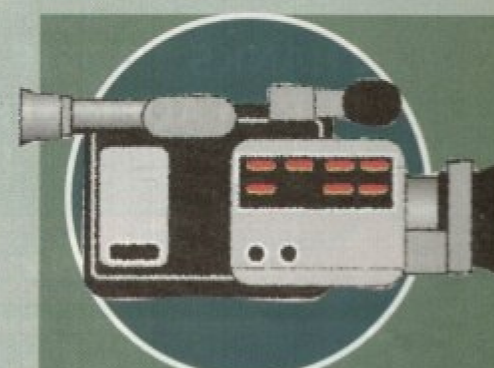
1 x Sony SVHS camcorder
3 x Tie microphones
2 x Redhead lights
3 x Extension leads
1 x Gaffer tape
3 x Video cassettes (E40)
1 x tripod

*An example of a small checklist. Always make sure to tick off the equipment when going to and from the location*

## Contact me

Gary Whiteley can be contacted by e-mail as drgaz@cix.compulink.co.uk
And, by way of a shameless plug, you could also buy his Amiga Desktop Video book (ISBN 1-898275-08-4) from Future Publishing (Tel: 0225 822510) or from any good bookshop.

## Home video Part 4



ther your clients or your video business than producing a badly thought-out video.

You'll probably feel terrible about it (unless you're one of the out and out cowboys that gets everyone else a bad name) and instead of a glowing testimony to what many people consider to be one of the happiest days of their lives, you'll be delivering a patchy, hastily-shot and probably fairly incoherent apology of an edited videotape of "Jack and Jill's Wedding Day". Put yourself in your client's shoes and ask yourself what you would expect for the money you're paying. If it doesn't seem enough to cover the costs, say so before you take on the job.

Inform the client what they can reasonably expect to get for their budget and, if they aren't happy with it, apologise to them and decline the job. Dirty deeds done cheap are no help to anyone – client or producer. The client gets a job which falls short of their expectations and the producer gets a big headache, the makings of an ulcer and hardly enough change to buy some blank tape.

Even if you're an amateur, try to base your video production on professional principles. Keep everyone happy, do the job to the best of your ability (and the budget's) and deliver on time.

Make some profit – it isn't a dirty word – even make a living from it if you can. But whatever you do, don't forget that one of the most valuable production values is to be found in the thoroughness of your planning, organisation and research.

Film and video production isn't at all the 'glamorous' business many people imagine it to be. It is often long, drudging, boring work. So keep everything on course, avoid too much stress and surprise everyone with your results – by getting your planning right first.



## Storyboards

**Storyboards are a sketch plan of a shoot, showing the main shots and actions. They are usually prepared as a series of small drawings (which don't have to be particularly artistic – they just need to be understandable) with short notes describing specific details, dialogue and scene numbers as necessary.**

**Storyboards not only assist in the planning of a shoot by abbreviating the flow of a production in the mind, but also serve as an aide memoire when you've become so engrossed in what you're doing that you've forgotten what comes next!**

**In addition to the storyboard, you'll find it helpful to produce things like Equipment Check Lists and transport and movement details.**

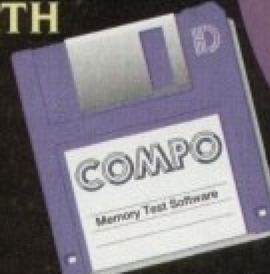
**By detailing all the equipment you'll need you can make sure that you have it all ready to go, right down to the last video cable and spare battery.**

**Eventually, such details become second nature, but it's always as well to have the list handy just in case you've had a hard night and still need to be efficient in the morning.**

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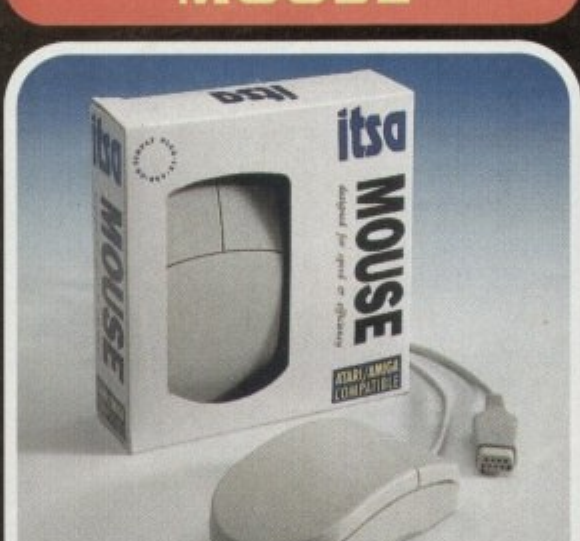



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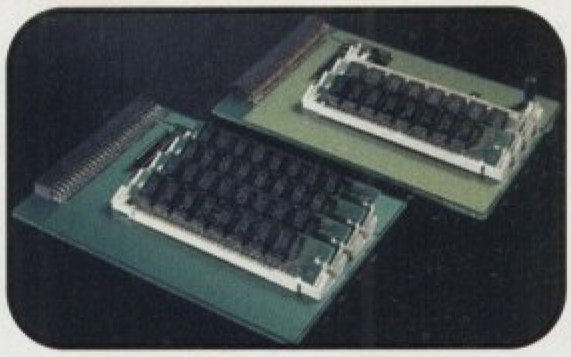
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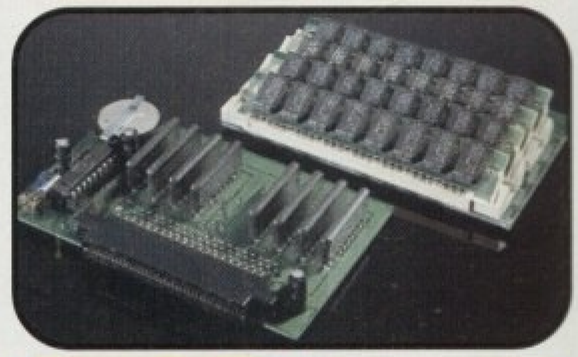
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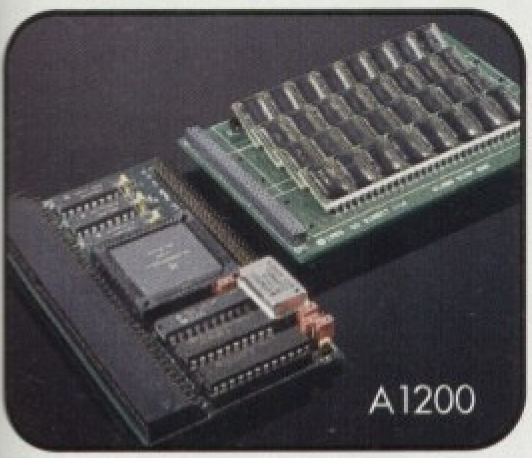
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# Adding panache

**In the second part of our Scroller2 tutorial, Steve White explains how you can add special effects to your text creations**

To spruce up your original Tutorial1 text, we shall start by using more than one font. We'll alter the credits so that the job of each person is in one font and their name is in another.

To do this, use the Edit Text screen's Control Panel. When you initially enter the Edit Text screen the Control Panel is invisible, so click the right mouse button and it will appear in the top right of the screen. Clicking the right mouse button again will remove it... and so on.

The purpose of the Control Panel is to let you access many of the Edit Text screen's keyboard functions with the mouse. You will see that the Control Panel is made up of a grid of buttons which can all be clicked on to achieve different functions.

For our purposes we will use the Control Panel to change the font used on all the names in our credits. To do this we must move the cursor to the first letter of the text we want to change.

This can be done by clicking on the arrow buttons in the Control Panel as they operate identically to the cursor keys. Use them now to move the cursor to the letter J in the name Joe Bloggs on the second line.

Now we will change the font. To do this with the mouse use the Font Selector which is accessed via the Control Codes screen. To get to the Font Selector first click on the button labelled CR,CD at the bottom left of the Control Panel.

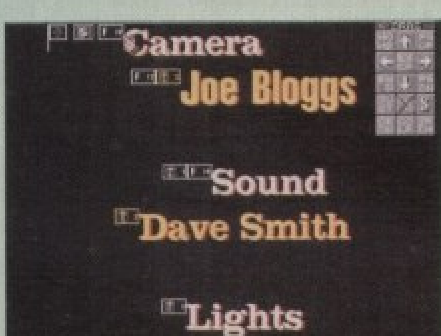
This will take you into the Control Codes screen – more on this later. In the middle of the Control Codes screen on the left there is a button labelled Font Selector. Click on it and you will have made it into the Font Selector.

## SELECTING

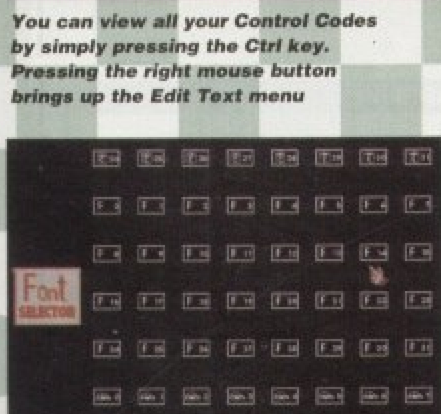
The Font Selector allows you to see all the fonts currently available in memory and then select one for use. If you click on the down arrow at the bottom of the Font Selector you will be able to scroll through all the fonts. You should see that the Rich60 font is highlighted as it is the font currently in use. For the names in the credits we'll use Compact64 which is near the bottom of the list, though you can use any other font you like.

To select a font click on it and it will become highlighted. Information about which key combination is required to access it is also shown. To finish, click on the button labelled Ent at the top right of the screen.

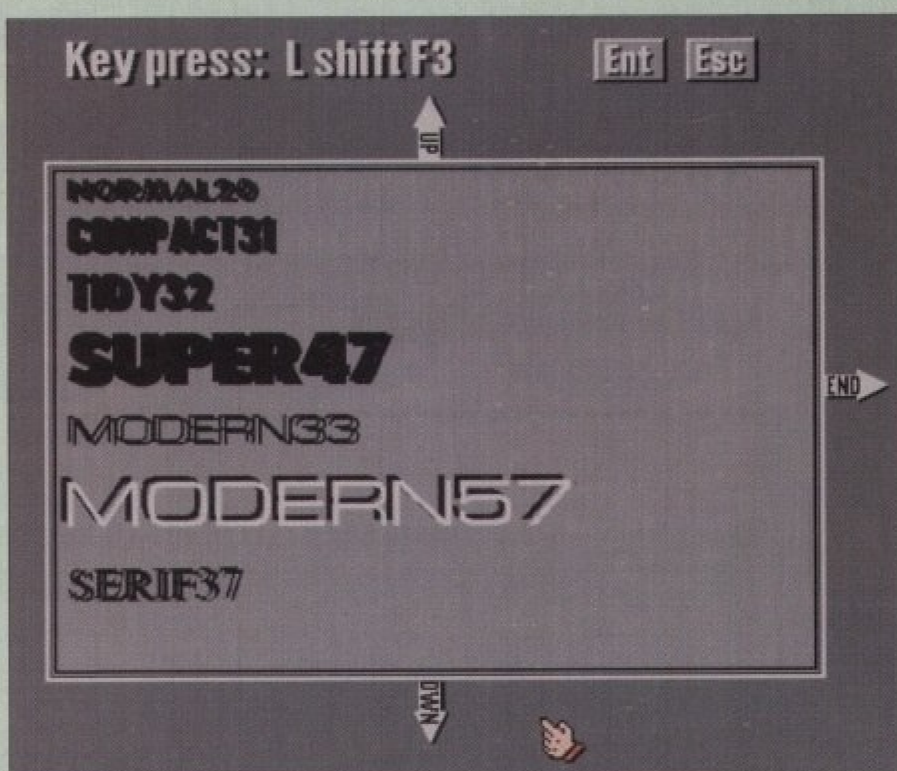
Scroller2 will then go back to the Edit Text screen where you should see that all the text after and including the J in Joe Bloggs has been changed to the font you



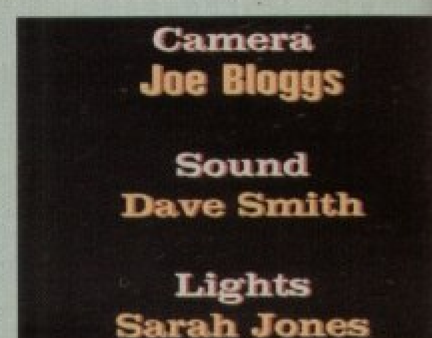

You can view all your Control Codes by simply pressing the Ctrl key. Pressing the right mouse button brings up the Edit Text menu




There are a various assortment of Control Codes that will affect your text in different ways




You can also access the Font Selector from the Control Codes screen. Remember that changes to a font affect only that font and no others




Once you are familiar with the different Control Codes you can edit your text to your heart's content




You can completely edit your text's size, shaep and format with the Control Codes

## Let it roll

Now we've fixed up the text let's make the credits roll up the screen until they get to the Director's credit where, in time-honoured fashion, we will pause the text so that Director – Stella Adams stops midway up the screen and stays there for several seconds before finally disappearing.

The first part of this is relatively simple. Instead of pressing 0 to halt the scroll (as we did in Tutorial1) we can enter a Pause Code. Add four blank lines after Stella Adams by pressing return four times. Press Ctrl to make the Control Codes visible, press F4 to get to the Control Codes screen and then select the Pause 10 code (that's the box with a small clock in it and the number 10).

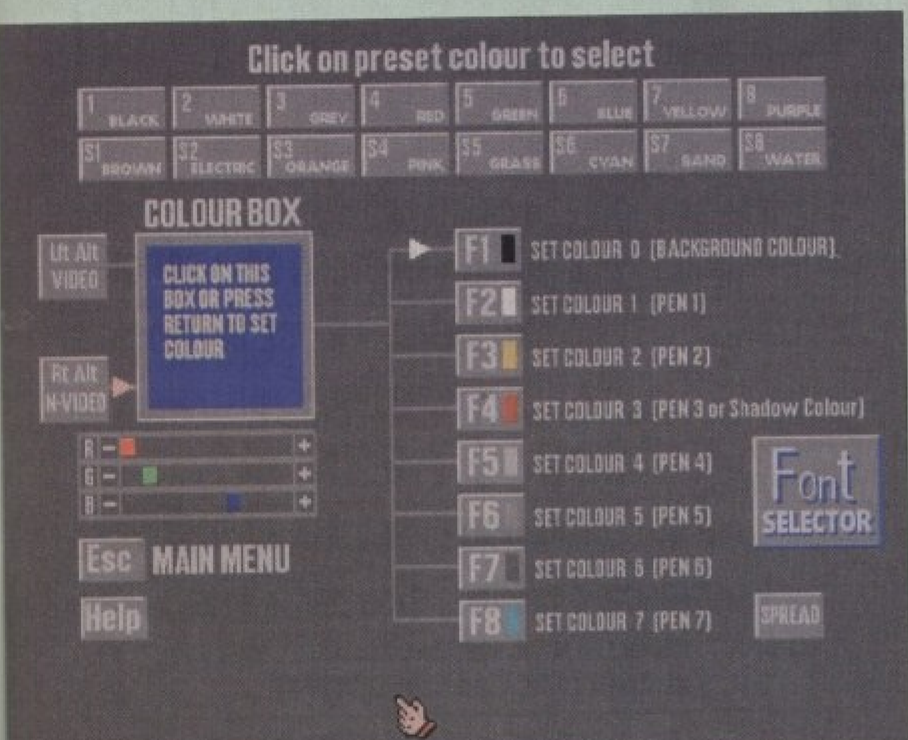
You may want to use the cursor keys to scroll down the character set in order to access the Control Codes.

When you are returned back to the Edit Text screen you should see the new Pause Code added at the bottom of the screen.

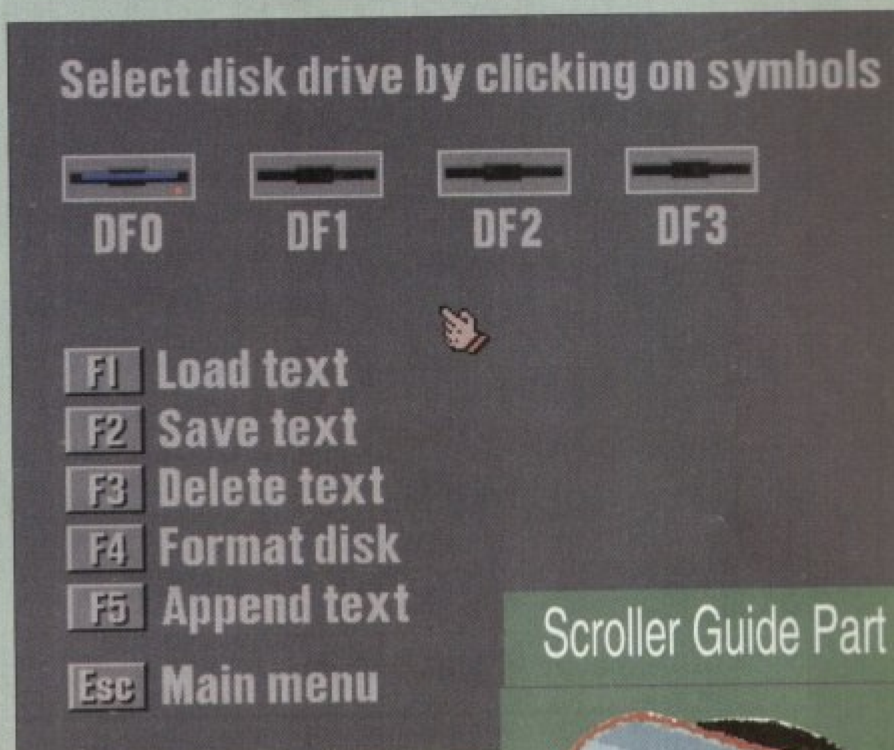
Press Esc to return to the main menu and then F1 to test progress so far. The credits should scroll up and then pause for a moment when they reach the Director's credit. We can now add some better special effects.

Re-enter the Edit Text screen and make sure that the Control Codes are visible. Move the cursor to just after the Pause Code, open the Control Codes screen and select the first Fade Down symbol (a large arrow pointing downwards in a box) and return to the main

# to Scroller2

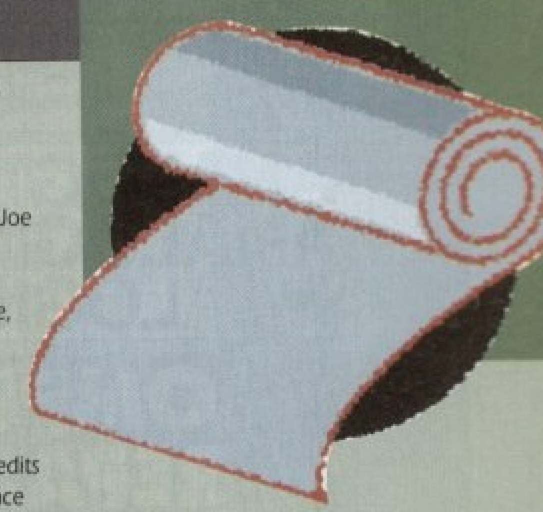



***Scroller2 offers you the chance to provide professional desktop video titles for use with your favourite videos. It is easy to use and impliments a very user-friendly interface***




***Don't forget to save your text regularly. We may call upon it in the next issue***

## Scroller Guide Part 2



just selected. As with most of the layout functions in Scroller2, any change affects all the text from the current cursor position onwards. The reason for this lies within the dark mystery that is the concept of Scroller2.

Press the Ctrl key on your keyboard and you should see the letters CC appear next to the percentage figure in the top left corner of the screen. The CC tells you that the Control Codes will be made visible.

Looking through your text you should see that lots of little boxes which contain symbols have appeared throughout your text. For example, the first lines should look like those on the screenshot.

The little boxes and symbols are called Control Codes because they are used by Scroller2 to control every aspect of your text. They are even used to add special effects like the fades and wipes we will be using later in this tutorial.

### ATTRIBUTES

If we take the first four lines as an example, we can see that on the first line is a Control Code to centre our text, followed by one to turn drop shadowing on and then one to use font number 19 (all fonts have numbers which they are referred to by).

All the text that follows a Control Code will be affected – so the word Camera becomes centred with a drop shadow in font 19. The second line starts with a Control Code to change to colour 2, so, Joe Bloggs appears in colour 2 (which is currently yellow).

Then, after the blank line on line three, line four starts with a Control Code to change back to colour 1 – white. Therefore, the word Sound appears in white.

Try looking through the rest of the credits and working out what is happening. Once you have understood the Control Code system you should find that everything in Scroller2 is very logical.

If you want to make the Control Codes invisible, simply press the Ctrl key once again and they will disappear. As you should have realised by now, you have been using Control Codes all along – it's just that you haven't been able to see them.

If you have understood the principle of Scroller2's Control Codes you will already have guessed that we need to put a font Control Code at the beginning of each line where we want a font to change.

The line of text after Joe Bloggs is Sound which we want to appear in font number 19 (Rich60), the one which we started with.

To do this, first move the cursor over the letter S in Sound and then use the Font Selector again, but this time select Rich60. When you insert a font change you will see a font Control Code added to your text. Don't forget that you will only see it if Control Codes are visible.

**menu.**

**Play the scroll with F1 and this time you should see the Director credit first pause and then fade away. You should also see it re-appear again a moment later and continue scrolling. This is obviously not right, so we must make a couple more additions before we are actually done.**

**To correct this final problem we need to add two more Control Codes after the Fade Down code. The first is another Pause Code – this time Pause Code 2 – and then we need to issue the Clear Screen Code (CLS).**

**These two extra codes will ensure that after a slight pause (to allow the fade to take full effect) the screen will be cleared so that we don't get a repeat of the Director credit after the fade.**

**Add the extra codes now and view the results. The extra codes that you have just added probably seem totally illogical. However, there is a good reason for them.**

**When Scroller2 gets to the end of your title it automatically resets things like font, colour and justification to its defaults. One of the other things that is reset is the fade condition – if it were not reset and you did a looping title that ended with a fade down, you would only be able to see anything the first time through. This is because the text would still be faded down.**

**And that's it. In next month's issue we will be providing a reference for Scroller2 and some useful hints and tips.**

# Memory test

**Don't let ARexx allocate memory for you, get in control. Paul Overaa shows you how**

Most of the time ARexx functions take care of any memory allocations required automatically and transparently. Although rarely needed in normal scripts, there are, however, a number of ways to explicitly allocate system memory.

You may, for example, want to set up a buffer (some temporary storage space) at a known address and one way of doing this is by using this ARexx built-in GetSpace() function:

```
address=GetSpace(size)
```

where size is the size of the memory area you want and address is its address.

ARexx releases this memory automatically when the script terminates and so, strictly speaking, it is not necessary for a script to explicitly release memory acquired in this way.

To my mind, relying on ARexx to do your cleaning up operations is a bad thing (if nothing else it encourages habits that will lead you into trouble when working with other languages). ARexx does in fact provide this FreeSpace() function which allows memory to be returned:

```
n=FreeSpace(address,size)
```

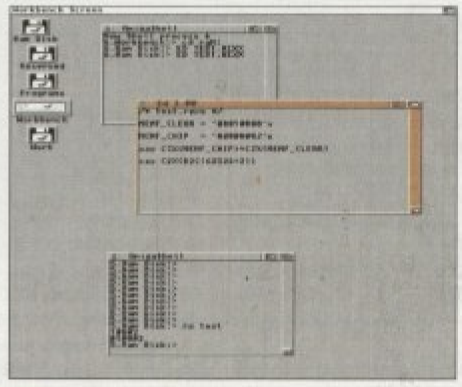
Very occasionally, a coder might need rather more control over the memory allocation process and in these cases it is necessary to use the lower level memory handling functions provided as part of the rexxsupport library.

The AllocMem() function provides control over the type of memory being allocated. It uses the same type of 'flags' as the underlying Exec function uses and you'll often see these flag values given in decimal form like this:

| | |
|---|---|
| Public Memory | 1 |
| Chip Memory | 2 |
| Fast Memory | 4 |
| Clear Memory | 65536 |

As well as wondering about the purpose of the numbers themselves, you may well be asking at this stage what a 'flag' is.

In the computing world, flags are simply bits present in a variable, or perhaps a microprocessor's hardware register, which have been assigned some specific meaning.



**The best way to get the hang of flags and conversion function use is to experiment with short examples like this**

They are yes/no (true/false) type indicators which require just a single bit of storage space. A longword (four bytes) of memory can therefore act as a store for up to 32 different flag values.

By convention, if a flag bit has the value 1, then it is said to be set (or true), and if the bit has the value 0 it is said to be clear (or false). The decimal form of combined flag values always tends to hide the identity of the flags – what is needed is an appreciation of the state of the underlying bits used to represent the numbers.

As far as memory allocation is concerned, a number of standard flag values are provided in the exec/memory.h and memory.i system include files.

ARexx coders do not need to concern themselves with these files, except for the fact that they must use the standard memory attribute flag values when allocating memory (because the system functions expect this).

The bit position definitions of the most common memory attribute flags in binary form are as follows:

```
MEMF_PUBLIC 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000
0000 0001
MEMF_CHIP 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000
0010
MEMF_FAST 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000
0100
MEMF_CLEAR0000 0000 0000 0001 0000 0000 0000
0000
```

Translated to ARexx hex form these become:

```
MEMF_PUBLIC '00000001'x
MEMF_CHIP   '00000002'x
MEMF_FAST   '00000004'x
MEMF_CLEAR  '00010000'x
```

So to allocate chip memory you'd need a flag value of '00000002'x. To allocate and zero a particular memory block, just add the appropriate memory type and memory clear flags together. The string '00010002'x for instance would allocate cleared chip memory.

## Embedding

Once you've got the hang of the general principles, memory allocation is easy enough to do, but embedding numbers in the way I've just described is a bad practice.

A better approach in my mind is to define some pseudo constants, ie fixed variables, that act as constant values. Being a diehard C coder at heart, I tend to adopt uppercase conventions like this:

```
MEMF_PUBLIC = '00000001'x
MEMF_CHIP = '00000002'x
MEMF_FAST = '00000004'x
MEMF_CLEAR = '00010000'x
```

With these definitions in place your scripts can then use expressions such as C2D(MEMF_CLEAR)+C2D(MEMF_CHIP) to add the required flag values together, and then use the D2C() function to produce the equivalent four byte string needed for the AllocMem() function.

The need for the C2D() and D2C() conversion functions make the expressions a little more unwieldy than those coded in other languages, but this approach will allow you to write ARexx code which makes it very clear which flags are being set.

Look for instance at the following two expressions. The second call, despite the fact that it is a little more complex, leaves you in no doubt that 1000 bytes of cleared chip memory are being allocated:

```
AllocMem(1000,D2C(65536+2))
AllocMem(1000,D2C(C2D(MEMF_CLEAR)+C2D(MEMF_CHIP)))
```

When you experiment with these types of functions and want to view the flag values being produced, you can always use the C2X() function to produce the hexadecimal output. For instance the statement:

```
Say C2X(MEMF_CHIP)+C2X(MEMF_CLEAR)
```

produces an output value of 010002 hex, confirming that the chip memory and cleared memory flags are being correctly set in the resulting string.

With AllocMem(), unlike GetSpace(), it is the responsibility of the programmer to return memory after use, and this is done using the rexxsupport library FreeMem() function.

As far as using allocated memory is concerned, data can be written to memory locations using the built-in Storage() or Export() functions.

Similarly, Import() can be used to read the contents of such memory back into an ARexx string. I'll deal with these memory read/write functions next month.





# Blissful union

Part 2

**Continuing on from last month's visit to a professional graphics house, Adam Phillips visits Alternative Image, producers of commercial graphics and videos**



One of the characters in AI's latest project rendered on Imagine 3

The Leicester-based company must be one of the most established Amiga users in the business. Formed eight years ago and primarily concentrating its finances on a video camera and recorder, Alternative began life as a very small, fledgling video company headed by two partners, Clive Worden and Stuart Hicking.

After two years of various videography projects, Henri Bujko was brought in as the third partner. Now heading the computer graphics side of the business, Henri explains why they moved into the Amiga market.

"We realised that we were paying so much everytime we went to a facility to get titles put on to a video and decided that the Amiga would be a cost-effective way of doing it, so we bought a 2000."

Bujko continues: "I thought it was really amazing – it was only a 68000-based 2000 with 3 megs of ram in it. Included with the machine was the usual Dpaint and also Videoscape 3D. Henri began to use the latter more and more, creating three dimensional drawings – I got obsessed with Videoscape 3D basically."

As the company grew, so did the computer graphics side of the operation. Videos began to feature more and more animations and effects.

Alternative Image were one of the first buyers of Commodore's 020 cards for the 2000 and added more memory and larger hard drives to cope with the increase in computer-related work.

Next on the shopping list were more 2000s and a single 3000 for rendering purposes only. Questioned on the lack of a 4000 in their Commodore graphics arsenal, Henri is adamant: "The basic 4000 isn't fast enough – because we are fully 24-bit already, there's no real advantage in having the machine."

Their current set-up includes four Amiga 2000's, with the average spec for each including an 040 accelerator card (nearly twice as fast as a 4000 040), 34 megs of ram and a 500 meg hard drive – "just like a work station plus a 24-bit graphics card."



A ship elegantly descends to the bottom of the sea as digitised, screaming faces rise to greet it – all created on Real 3D v2 with the help of a video camera for the faces

On the software side, things have moved on somewhat from the early days: "As graphics became more and more to the fore, more and more people wanted sophisticated stuff so that side just grew and grew."

Now ADpro, Image FX, Brilliance, Imagine 3, Real 3D v2 and VistaPro, as well as Forge and Essence texturing make up the current tools for graphic creation.

## PROJECTS

Some of Alternative's more recent computer work has been included in projects for Walkers Crisps, Caterpillar UK, Crookes HealthCare and various fitness videos.

They have also dabbled in pop videos and the X-MIX techno video series that features various animations accompanied by rave music.

At the moment, they are working on a secret project that Henri claims will be "something that hasn't been done before." Take a look at some of the graphics on this page and you'll see that the underwraps 24-bit interactive game is looking rather special. Expect a full report from Amiga Computing as soon as we are able to release more details. As for the future, it would seem that the graphics side of the business will grow to be larger than the video production-that began Alternative Image's steady climb to success eight years ago.



A computerised flight over a landscape, created on VistaPro for Nurofen

While the recession did hit hard and employees were laid off, freelancers now form a vital part of the company structure and people like Yuri Large, another staff member, and Martin Bibby, a highly respected Imagine artist, continue to add to the company's calibre of talent.

Henri's personal ambition for the oncoming years is to create an animation feature using computer graphics exclusively.

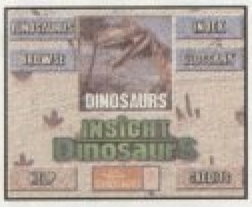
He also has plans to move on to the much heralded LightWave at some point if he's convinced that it's as good as everyone keeps telling him. Looks like another sale for NewTek.

## Commodore complaints

Henri Bujko is not a happy man when the words "Commodore management" are mentioned within an audible range. "I never had any respect for Commodore because, although they have put a lot of money in to the 1200 as a games machine, their division for professional users is bad. Their marketing is bad. They just don't know what they are doing. They missed out on so many opportunities, you couldn't believe it."

Indeed, like Simon Hough of Crystal Haze last month, Henri makes it a rule not to tell clients that he uses Amigas to create graphics with: "What we rely on is showing people what we do and everybody that sees the finished result thinks it's marvellous."

# INSIGHT
# DINOSAURS




INSIGHT:DINOSAURS is the second title in the INSIGHT series, a lavishly produced title rich in multimedia. You can be assured INSIGHT:Dinosaurs will be visually stunning and technically correct as the title is being produced in association with the British Natural History Museum, one of the world's foremost centres of excellence in the field of paleontology. A unique title for the whole family, produced in a concise, easy to read style which allows it to be used for reference and browsing alike.






A comprehensive A-Z section gives in depth information on the best known dinosaurs from Allosaurus to Velociraptor.
Life of the Dinosaurs covers Anatomy, Attack And Defense, Herbivores, Carnivores, Climate, Pack Hunters, Lone Hunters, Herds, Scavengers, Descendants and much more.
World of the Dinosaurs covers Death Of The Dinosaurs, Shifting Continents, Family Tree, Fossil Hunters and Hunting and much more.






DINO SAW is a chinese jigsaw with 25 different dinosaur puzzles

DINO PAINT is a simple to use children's colouring book with 25 pages for you to colour.

DINO QUIZ is a multimedia quiz for one or two players with questions on all aspects of Dinosaurs.



TEXT - Comprehensive text coverage

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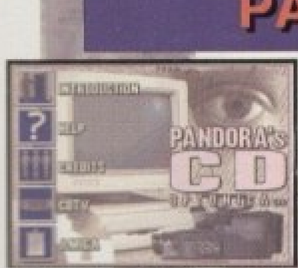


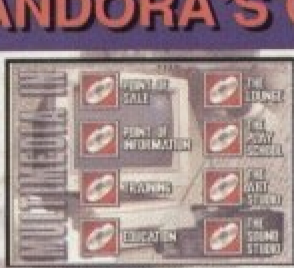
NARRATIONS - Hear the story of the Dinosaurs.

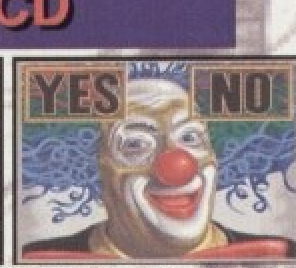
MOTION VIDEO - Video clips bring to life this lost world!

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## PANDORA'S CD






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# Getting it right

**Paul Overaa shows you how to edit your sequences**

All sequencers provide editing facilities, although they vary enormously both in terms of the facilities offered and in the names given to the various options.

Fortunately, the more common editing functions, i.e. those which tend to be available on most sequencers, are usually easy enough to identify from the manual descriptions of what they do.

The term 'Editing' is usually taken to mean making changes to track or sequence data after it has been recorded. In practice, the user also has some control over both the type of data to be recorded and the way that existing track/sequence data should be replayed.

The usual arrangement is that the sequencer will have a special 'global parameters' page, or list of menu options, whose settings will govern the way the sequencer actually behaves during use.

It's here that the user can decide whether the sequencer should use an internal or an external clock, whether it should provide an audiable metronome click or not, whether it should continuously loop through an N-bar sequence or not, and so on.

Other settings may involve things like being able to protect a Midi channel from being transposed, automatically sending Midi start messages, or inserting gaps between groups of messages which might otherwise be sent as unnecessarily dense packets of Midi data.

In addition to all this, there may be any number of pre-record and post-record parameters and effects which can be selected.

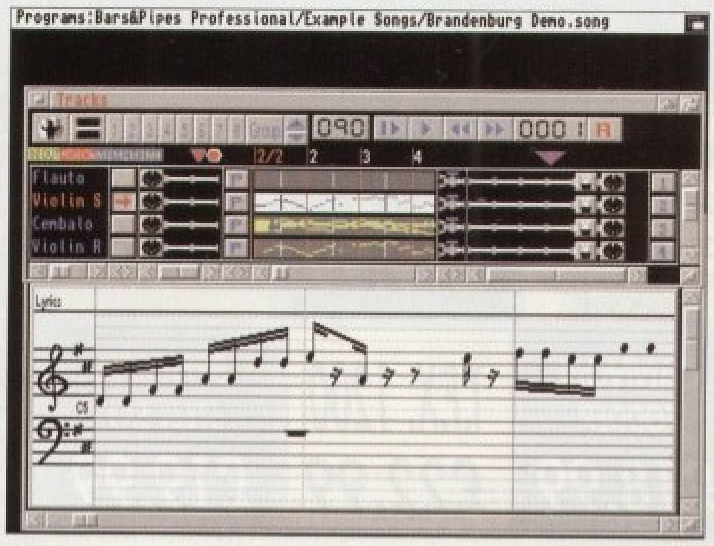
The difference between these two classes of controls is well worth mentioning: Pre-record parameters will govern the type of data actually stored in the tracks and sequences. Post-record parameters govern only how the stored Midi data is played back.

A good example of a common global facility is that of Midi message filtering and remapping: There are a few occasions when it is useful to be able to restrict the sequencer's recording or use of certain types of Midi messages.

Similarly, it's often handy to be able to ask the sequencer to modify certain types of events. The Midi Echo/Thru option, which allows you to change the channel number of incoming Midi data before it is stored and retransmitted, is one example of a pre-record effect, but usually much more can be done.

Sequencer One, for instance, has a 'Set Filter' option which allows many other types of Midi messages to be filtered and/or modified.

Note on/off, polyphonic aftertouch, program change, pitchbend, and controller information can all be selectively filtered out. It's also possible to convert channel aftertouch messages into controller data, remap controller numbers or even convert controller data into channel aftertouch messages.




**Sequencers like Bars & Pipes Pro provide extremely powerful editing facilities**

These particular Sequencer One facilities are all of the 'pre-record' type. If, for example, you decided to set the Sequencer One up so that it would filter out program-change messages, any track data subsequently recorded would end up containing no program change messages at all (any program-change messages that might have been present in the original Midi input stream get lost forever).

Most sequencers provide these types of pre-record filter options and Dr T's Tiger Cub, Music X etc., all have similar (although not completely identical) facilities.

Some sequencers are also able to produce filter and conversion effects after the data has been stored. These are post-record options and here the effects and settings work on the output side of the sequencer (Bars&Pipes is brilliant as far as this particular area is concerned and Music X is also good in this respect).

If you used a post-record filter option to remove program-change messages, you would not prevent these messages from being stored in the track or sequence but, even though they ended up being present, any program-change messages would be skipped over (i.e. ignored) when the data was played back.

## MESSAGES

The big difference of course is that if, in the latter scenario, you cancelled the program-change filter option, any 'hidden' program-change messages would be brought to life and would again become part of the sequencer's output stream.

Post-record options have the benefit of flexibility because you can always undo a particular setting. Pre-record filtering options, however, do still have a use as far as the elimination of the storage of unnecessary information is concerned (used to be handy on machines where memory was tight).

They have, however, become increasingly less attractive as the general editing facilities of commercial sequencers have become more powerful.

Nowadays, it is normally feasible to record everything and then decide, retrospectively, what Midi data is to be kept and what data should be discarded.

Sequencer One, for instance, includes facilities for selectively stripping out particular event types from a given track. Again, most sequencers offer similar facilities and with some it is possible not only to strip events, but to divert those isolated events to another track!



## Repeat performance

**At the highest level you can, if you make a mistake while you are recording your latest masterpiece, delete the track or sequence and start again – recording, and re-recording, until whatever it is that you are trying to play sounds perfect (or as near perfect as you need it).**

**Sometimes, if you've made a complete hash of it, that's probably the easiest thing to do anyway! Usually things are not quite that bad and you simply find yourself in a situation whereby most of what you've played sounds fine – but there are just a few places where slips have been made. Wouldn't it be nice if it were possible to go back and change those bits that weren't quite right.**

**Nowadays, of course, you can and with a sequencer it is actually possible to look at the individual notes in the track or sequence, remove ones that shouldn't be there, add notes that should be there or perhaps alter the pitch or duration of some existing notes.**

**Having made such changes, you just hit the sequencer's 'play' button and the 'corrected version' will sound the way you wanted it to sound in the first place.**

# On the other side

Phil South looks at mysticism on the Net.

There comes a time in every man's life when he realises he has a spiritual side. No, I'm not going to start chanting. There seems to be a thread running through a lot of Net life that everyone has a number of mystic sides to their personality and they use the Net as an opportunity for expanding these beliefs and ensuring that as many people as possible get the benefit of their ideals.

Some people just collect odd beliefs and add them to the growing number of weird and wonderful files you can read on the Net.

The most interesting stuff is centred around the various bogus religions which have surfaced over recent years, which at the same time lampoon and compete with the very religions they are set up to mimic.

Discordianism is one of them, and the Church of the SubGenius is another. Other stuff is just odd knowledge with nowhere else to go, like information about UFO contactees, JFK theories and other life-deforming nonsense of every other colour or another.

You can loosely categorise the mystical aspects of the Net into these groups:

- High Weirdness
- World Religions
- Bogus Religions
- Weird Science
- Conspiracy Theory
- UFOs
- Magic and Occult
- Herbalism

All these topics are readily discussed, and okay, you might not be looking for a new religion right now, who is? But it is absolutely fascinating and well worth the time it takes to seek it all out.

So here is a roundup of various bits and bobs I've been reading over the past few weeks. Most sources cite other sources, so by copping a feed to one source you are connected to other sources of info at the same time.

● **Bogus Religions** – the best chat about bogus religion, and also some of the funniest and oddest people on the Net are to be found in:

```
alt.slack
alt.discordia
alt.illuminati
```

Slack is the SubGenius newsgroup, discordia is the Discordians, and Illuminati is based on the excellent religious/political conspiracy theories of Robert Anton Wilson. Great stuff. You might also try to FTP to:

```
<quartz.rutgers.edu>
```

in the directory: /pub/subgenius/* as this also has some very good SubGenius stuff, including the infamous SG newsletter.

● **World Religions** – if you want to know more about, or flame people who believe in any world religion which takes your fancy, here are the groups you should be joining:

```
alt.religion.scientology
alt.religion.shamanism
alt.pagan
alt.satanism
soc.religion.bahai
soc.religion.christian
soc.religion.eastern
soc.religion.islam
soc.religion.quaker
soc.religion.shamanism
talk.religion.misc
talk.religion.newage
```

Obviously, making people in the Satanism newsgroup mad with you is not to be recommended.

● **UFOs** – if you've been abducted by aliens, then these are the groups where you ease your pain with a group of like-minded individuals:

```
alt.paranet.abduct
alt.paranet.paranormal
alt.paranet.science
alt.paranet.skeptic
alt.paranet.ufo
```

Obviously if you can't get a Usenet fed in Alpha Centauri, then you're stuffed.

● **Conspiracy** – just because you're paranoid, doesn't mean they're out to get you. Of course those guys across the street in the Range Rover with the tinted windows might just be lost and looking for directions. For solace, and even more things to get worried about, try these newsgroups:

```
alt.conspiracy
alt.mindcontrol
```

and then... wait, what was that funny noise outside?

● **High Weirdness** – the ultimate guide to high weirdness on the Net is the High Weirdness By Email guide, available by anon FTP from:

```
<slopoke.mlb.semi.harris.com>
```

among others. Usually to be found in the directory:

```
/pub/weirdness/weird2_1.doc
```

Look out also for weird2_1.sup, a supplement to the guide.

● **Magic, Magick, and other Occult Stuff** – eye of newt and toe of bat, ah yes, the black arts. Let's cast an eye into the crystal ball and see what floats to the top, eh?

To find texts and documents by the completely bat's ass Aleister Crowley, you need only FTP to:

```
<slopoke.mlb.semi.harriscom>
```

in the directory:

```
/pub/magick/magick/Crowley/*
```

Also try the Wiretap Gopher, one of the best sources for hard-to-get info, by gopher on:

```
<wiretap.spies.com>
```

and check out the Occult listings.

● **Weird Science** – the odd, bizarre world of alternative science. I love it to death and so will you. Perpetual motion machines, forgotten patents, suppressed information. You'll find it all here.

Interested in cryonics? Well get you hence by anonymous FTP to:

```
<rtfm.mit.edu>
```

in the directory:

```
/pub/usenet/news.answers/cryonics-faq/*
```

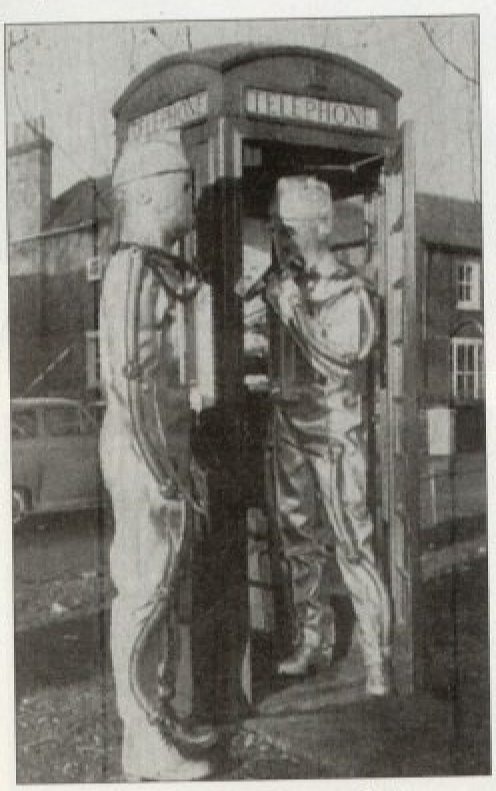
and all will be revealed. It might be an idea to wear a good stout jacket, because it's a bit cold in there.

Try also a gopher to:

```
<wiretap.spies.com>
```

the standard repository for odd info.





*There is something for everybody on the end of the phone*

# Fade to back

## See how AMOS loves to flash...

Amos code head Phil South looks at a nifty routine for fading the background colour.



Messing about with screen colours is a bit of a chore in Amos, as the program lacks any really simple palette or colour manipulation tools. Mostly you have to resort to tricks and tips which other people have coded – which is exactly where this little beauty from Marc Hall comes in.

But this is doubly fiendish, as Marc has figured out a way to strobe the background colour on an Amos screen, and does it very elegantly.

The code is a really good example of how to tweak colours in a user friendly way. It's also making extensive use of PROCs, which as anyone who knows me will tell you I prefer not to use, but it's good nonetheless.

What? What do I use instead of PROCs? Why sub-routines of course. Call me old fashioned but sub-routines work faster and are easier to debug.

PROCs need global variables to be set and other stuff like that. That's just my idea, and the other way works just as well. Anyway, back to Marc's program.

First a global variable assign:

```
Global CBACK
```

meaning that the variable CBACK can be used by all other parts of the program, including any PROCs. Next we tell the program that CBACK is equal to zero in hex:

```
CBACK=$0
```

Fine. We're obviously going to do a little bit of hexadecimal work here. Next a little looping structure to control the action:

```
For X=0 To 20
CB[Rnd(4096)]
Next X
```

This calls the CB procedure, then returns and calls it again, over and over until your eyes cross.

And finally the procedure:

```
Procedure CB[D]
```

First define it, then dimension your arrays, two of them G and R:

```
Dim R(2),G(2)
```

Then we do a little fine shuffling of the colours:

```
S=CBACK
R(0)=D/256
R(1)=(D/16) mod 16
R(2)=D mod 16
G(0)=S/256
G(1)=(S/16) mod 16
G(2)=S mod 16
```

The mod is a mathematical term which enables us to cycle a variable through a repetitive series of values. It stands for modulo and works by returning the remainder after a division.

So for example A=B mod C is the same as A=B-Int(B/C)*C. This sounds complicated but it really isn't. It does however produce a number of interesting effects, like allowing you to toggle between two values.

So as A increases in value, B mod C creates a series of numbers ranging from 0 to C-1. Anyway, back to the program. Having pumped your series of numbers to get a nice useful series of semi-random numbers under 4096, you then set the repeat until loop in motion:

```
Repeat
If G(0)>R(0) Then Dec G(0)
If G(0)
R(1) Then Dec G(1)
If G(1)
R(2) Then Dec G(2)
If G(2)
```

This looks at the numbers you've created, sorts them, and INCs and DECs the final figures accordingly. Lastly, the figures are fed to a Colour Back command, which cycles the colour of the background in a pleasing way:

```
Colour Back(G(0)*256+G(1)*16+G(2)) View
```

Then wait a bit:

```
Wait 2
```

And carry on until a certain circumstance exists:

```
Until D=(G(0)*256+G(1)*16+G(2)) CBACK=D
```

Then you can end the PROC:

```
End Proc
```

And there you have it. It's a nice simple program, but the maths is a little complicated.

Try pulling out the mod part of the program and running it as a loop so you can see how the program generates its numbers and therefore how it uses them.

It's easy to do this, as you simply add a status line into the program after each mod line, like so:

```
Print R(0);" - ";R(1);" - ";R(2);" - ";R(3)
```

and the same for the G() array, and as the program runs it'll print out the figures which created that event.

■ **Now you can tweak colours and create stylish and colourful screens**

### Monitor it

**Obviously if you're running Easy Amos or Amos Pro, then you will be able to run the program with Monitor and see the effect of each function as it executes.**

**It's also a good idea to clear the screen to the background colour, or you will have a big brown square in the middle of the screen. I also printed an IFF file containing some text to the screen, using Load IFF, but that is simple to do. Enjoy!**

### Write stuff

If you have an Amos question, or a routine you'd like to share with the world, then please write to Phil South, AMOS Column, Amiga Computing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

# All change



**Ben Pointer shows you how to add those missing characters to your fonts**

One of the most annoying things about fonts, including some expensive professional ones, is that they don't always contain a full character set.

Sure, all the standard letters and numbers are there, but sometimes there are punctuation marks missing, or foreign characters that you absolutely cannot do without, or, as is the case with many shareware fonts, the good old British pound symbol isn't there.

What can you do? Well, you can buy a professional font that contains everything you need, and this will set you back perhaps £30 – or maybe five or six times that if you have to buy an entire family.

Alternatively, you could invest in TypeSmith (if you haven't already) and fix it yourself. Let's go through the steps required with a real world example: the Times-Bold CG font from Gold Disk's Outline Fonts Pack, which has no fraction symbols in it.

Luckily for us, the standard Workbench CGTimes font does have fraction symbols, so we can pinch them from that.

## IMPORT

The first job is to run TypeSmith and import the CGTimes.font file from FONTS:_bullet_outlines, then import the Times-Bold.lib file from CGFonts: – this one will come in with CS Times Bold as the name of the font, whereas the Workbench font is called CG Times.

Organise the two windows on the screen so that they are both visible and you can see a full character in both. Click in the CG Times window and select Show Overview from the View menu.

Click on the quarter symbol in the overview and press RightAmiga-C to copy that character to the clipboard. Now close that overview, click in CS Times Bold window and show the overview for that font.

Again, click on the quarter symbol (it will be white, indicating that no character exists in that hole), and press RightAmiga-V to paste in the quarter symbol. Do the same for the other fractions if you like.

When you are finished you can close the Workbench CG Times font as we no longer need to use it.

Double click on the quarter symbol in the CS Times Bold overview to open a window for that character. At the moment that symbol has a width of zero, so the first thing to do is give it a width.

Ensure the quarter symbol is the active window, then select Metrics from the Edit menu. In the Width gadget type 900, press Return and hit the Use gadget.

You should see a vertical dashed line appear to the right of the quarter symbol. Do the same for the other fractions if you have added them to this font.

Right, that's the widths sorted. The final step before exporting the font is to adjust the appearance of the fractions slightly so that they better fit the design of a bold font.

Click in the quarter symbol window and press RightAmiga-A to select all the points, then select Scale from the Path menu. Ensure that you have the top radio gadget selected so that the scaling is performed relative to the centre of the character, type 120 into the Horizontal gadget and hit OK.

This will slightly fatten the vertical strokes of the character so that it is in keeping with the fat vertical strokes of the rest of the font. Note that we cannot scale the character vertically otherwise it will become taller than all the other characters and look weird.

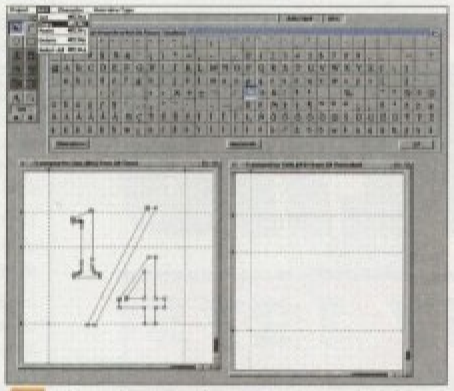
Again, do the same for the other fractions. And that's it. All that's left is to alter our font attributes to give our font a unique name and ID so that it does not affect the old Times-Bold font.

## IDENTITY

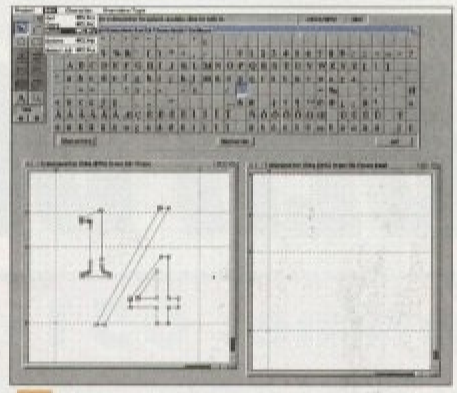
So select Font Attributes from the Edit menu and change both the FontName and the FullName to CSTimesBoldQTR, and change the Font ID number to, say 999 – nothing much on the Amiga uses this font ID number, but it would be wise to change it anyway; create your own ID system if you like. Don't change anything else in the Font Attributes window (leave the copyright message alone!) and hit OK to finish.

Now we can export it as a CG font, not forgetting to select the gadget that ensures the .dat and .metric files are created for ProPage. For heaven's sake, don't overwrite the old Times-Bold.lib file – you might need it again some time – call your new font Times-BoldQtr.lib or anything else you fancy.

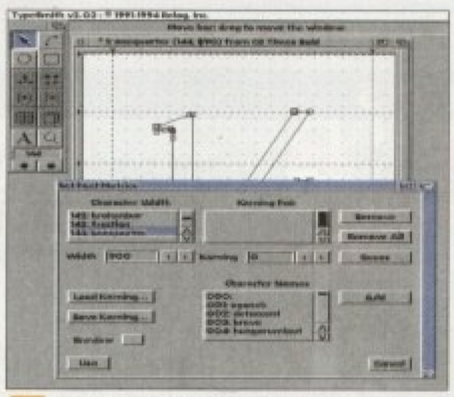
The filesize of this new font will be quite a lot bigger than the old Times-Bold.lib file. That's because in the import/export process TypeSmith has had to add more points to every character.



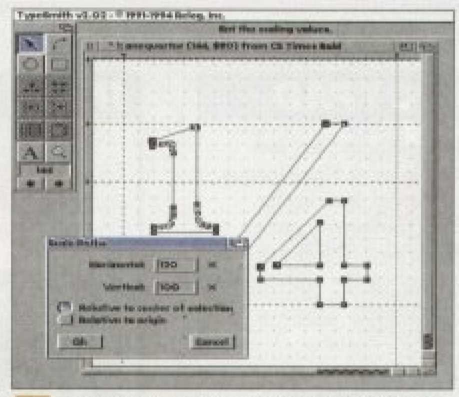
**Step 1: copy the quarter symbol from CG Times into the clipboard**



**Step 2: paste the quarter symbol from clipboard into the CS Times Bold font**



**Don't forget to give your characters a width!**



**Use the Scale feature to make the fractions better fit the Bold design**

## All over again

If you ever need to add to this font again, you should start from scratch using the original Times-Bold.lib file otherwise even more points per character will be added, and after only two generations the font will become almost half a megabyte big and fail to display.

You can type the new quarter symbol in ProPage in two ways: either press Alt-5, or hold down the Alt key and type 188 on the numeric keypad – 188 being the number of the quarter symbol in ProPage's character set.

The half symbol is number 189, three-quarters is 190. (These character numbers are defined in the cg.chardata file in the CGFonts: drawer.)

Naturally you can alter and add to fonts for use in other packages – I've used ProPage and Times-Bold merely as an example. Another candidate for alteration are the CSTimes fonts that come with PageStream; these don't have the @ "at" symbol in them, which again you can pinch from Workbench's CGTimes font.

One last thing before I leave you to it. If you ever find that your new character won't display, it'll almost certainly be because you forgot to give it a width in TypeSmith.

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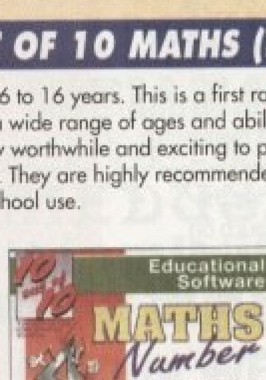

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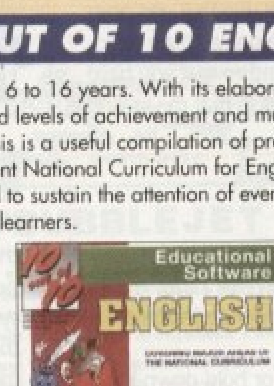



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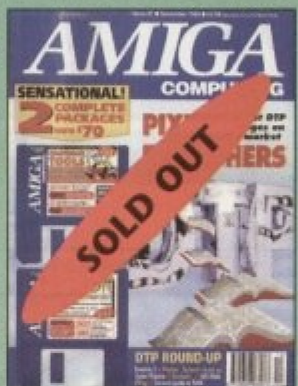
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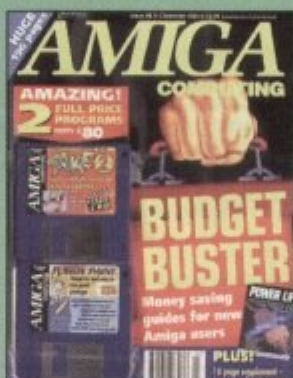
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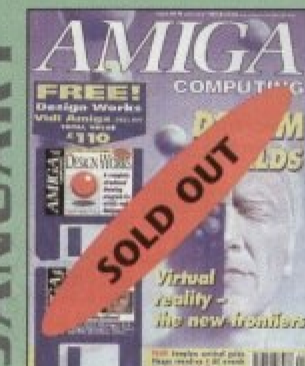

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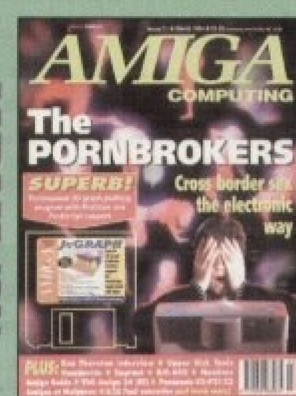

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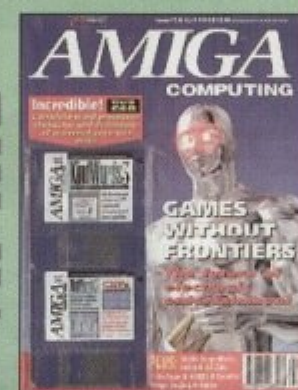

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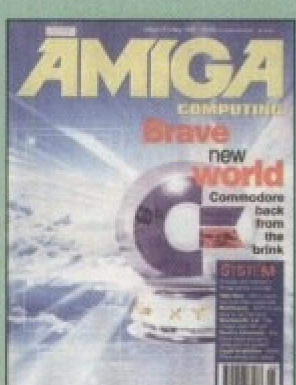

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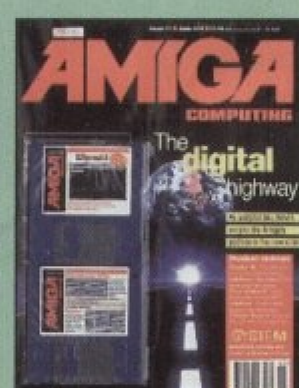

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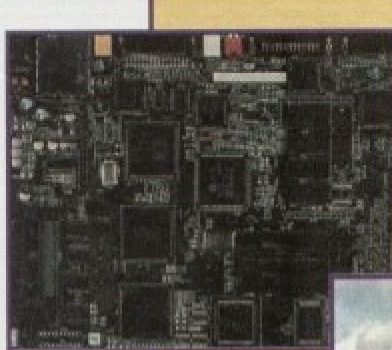
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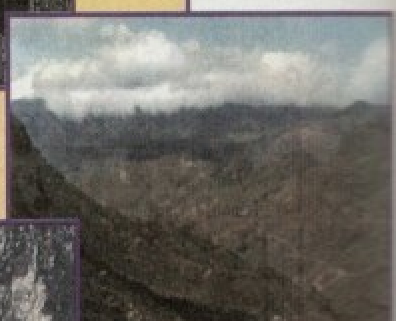
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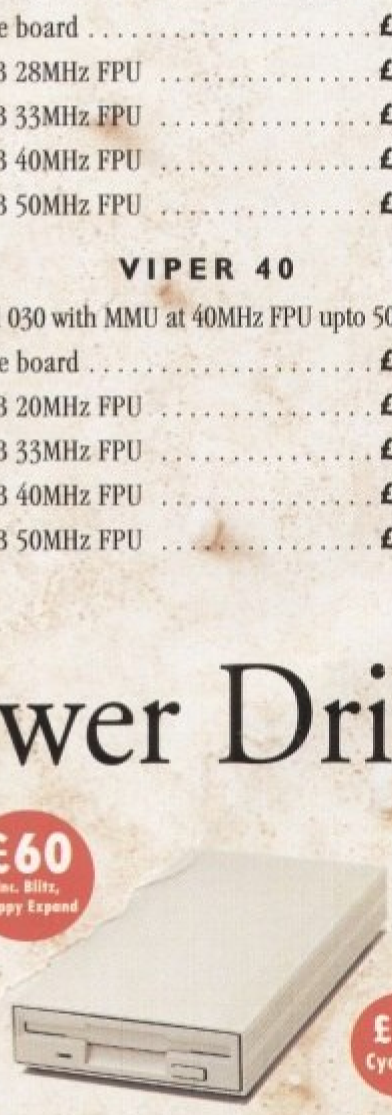
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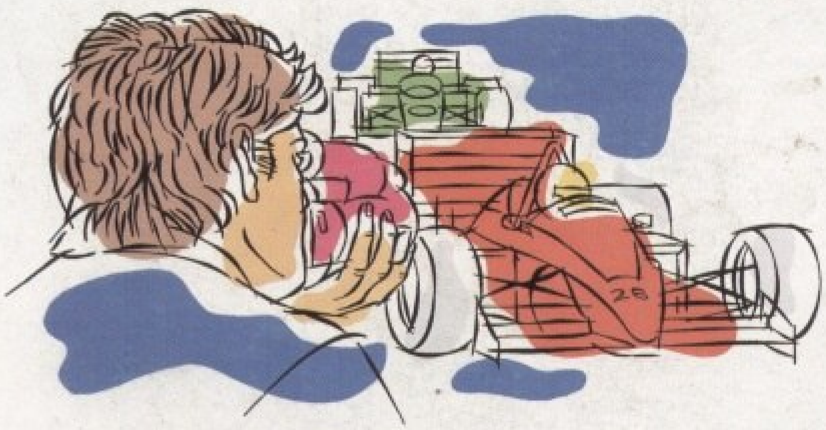
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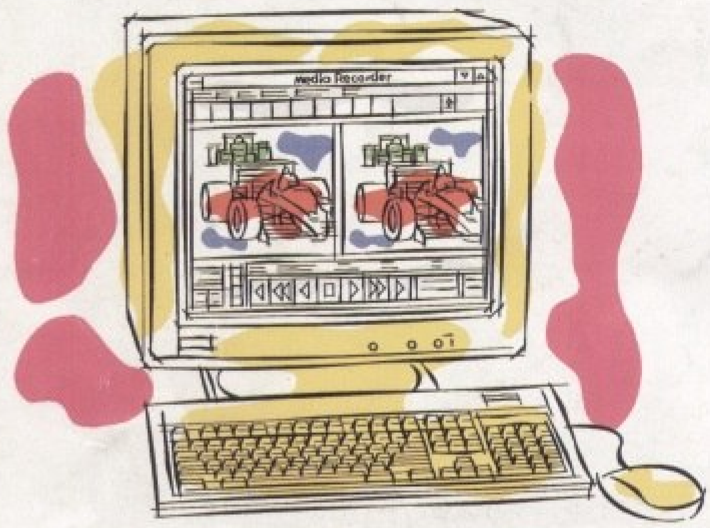
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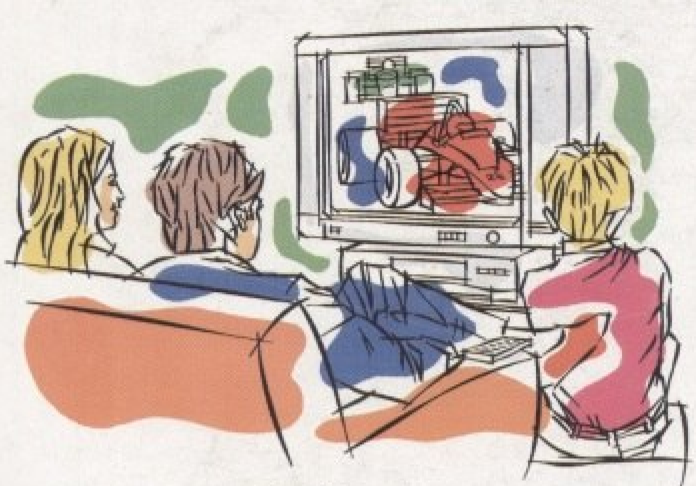
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